

MARY ENGELBREIT'S

FAMILY FARE

cookbook

120
family
favorite
recipes



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FEAN
FARE
cookbook

120 family favorite recipes

Illustrated by
Mary Engelbreit

Recipes by Friends and Fans

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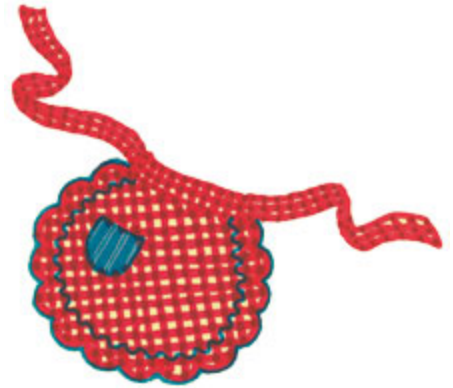
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If my family had to depend on me for food, they
would starve to death in a really cute kitchen.

—Mary Engelbreit

Letter from Mary

It's no secret that I'm not the chef in our family!
And even though I do not devote my time to cooking,
I still love and appreciate good food.
For this cookbook, I called upon my family, friends, and fans for their go-to
favorite family classic meals—the ones that are always greeted with smiles and
salivating mouths. And, boy, did they deliver! Included here are family secret
meatballs, time-tested cakes, special-day breakfasts,
and hundreds of other family classic recipes.
Of course, we here at the Mary Engelbreit Studio
tested everything in our kitchen to ensure
each recipe's measurements, steps, and delectability!
I hope you enjoy these recipes as much as we have.
Eat up!

Mary



One of the very nicest things about life is the way we must regularly stop whatever it is we are doing and devote our attention to eating.

—Luciano Pavarotti and William Wright,
Pavarotti, My Own Story

Appetizers & Beverages



Richard Mittelhauser
Melbourne, Florida

Sausage Appetizers

Makes 75 appetizers

- 1 pound ground pork sausage
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 2 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (or any cheese blend)
- 1 cup ranch dressing
- 1 (4.25-ounce) can chopped black olives
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 5 (1.90-ounce) boxes phyllo mini shells

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a skillet, sauté the sausage, garlic, and Worcestershire sauce until the sausage is cooked through. In a medium bowl, combine the cheese, ranch dressing, olives, and red pepper flakes with the sausage mixture. Fill each tart shell with a teaspoon of the mixture and place on an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the cheese melts.

This is a recipe I have developed over the past few years . . . it is a very easy recipe that makes tasty treats for the holidays. —RM

Kim Johnson
Carthage, Illinois

Buffalo Chicken Dip

Makes 6 cups dip

2 (9.75-ounce) cans white-meat chicken, drained
3/4 cup wing or cayenne sauce, plus more to taste
1 cup ranch dressing
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese
Corn or tortilla chips, for serving

Combine all of the ingredients, except the corn chips, in a saucepan. Heat over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until heated through. Serve the dip warm with the corn chips.

This dip is so yummy. People cannot get enough of it! You can make it as hot as you like! —KJ



Jane Sellards
Apopka, Florida

Mimi's Garlic Cheese

Makes 3 logs

2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
2 cups shredded mild or medium cheddar cheese
1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
4 cloves garlic, minced (or more if you love garlic!)
Paprika, for sprinkling
Round butter crackers, for serving

Place the cheeses and garlic in a blender or food processor and process until blended. Divide the mixture into three equal portions. Form each portion into a log about 2 inches in diameter and 5 to 6 inches long. Sprinkle the paprika onto a sheet of waxed paper. Roll each cheese log in the paprika until coated. Wrap each log in plastic wrap and chill for several hours. Slice the cheese logs and serve on crackers.

This is a Christmas favorite that my mom always made and we continue to do so each year. The original recipe calls for one fifty-cent piece of mild cheese and one fifty-cent piece of strong cheese (that lets you know that it's an old recipe). My children make it now and it always brings to mind our wonderful times with Mimi.

—JS

Bridget Edwards
Spring, Texas

Beaumont Dip

Makes 10 servings

2 (4.25-ounce) cans chopped black olives
1 (4.5-ounce) can chopped green chiles
4 green onions (green and white parts), chopped
3 tomatoes, seeded and diced
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Tortilla chips, for serving

Stir together all of the ingredients, except the tortilla chips, in a medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate the dip for several hours to let the flavors blend. Serve with the tortilla chips.

This is my mom's recipe. She's written on the recipe card "always a hit," which it is! The recipe was one she got from a friend while living in Beaumont, Texas, thus the name "Beaumont Dip." My mom died eight years ago and having recipes in her handwriting means a lot to us. —BE

Cathy Marinoni
Lafayette, Louisiana

Spinach Bread

Makes 10 to 15 servings

1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/2 small onion, chopped finely
2 cloves garlic, chopped finely
1/4 cup real bacon bits
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained, and patted dry
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 loaf French bread, halved lengthwise

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Combine all of the ingredients, except the bread, in a medium skillet. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the mixture is hot and the cheese is melted and creamy. Spread the mixture onto both bread halves and bake, uncovered, on an ungreased cookie sheet for 15 to 20 minutes, or until bubbly. Cut the bread into slices and serve warm.

Krista Rice
Highland Village, Texas

Special Corn Dip

Makes 6 servings

1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup sour cream
3 green onions, chopped
1-3 jalapeños, seeded and chopped, or more to taste
1 (11-ounce) can Mexican corn, drained
Corn or tortilla chips, for serving

In a mixing bowl, stir the cream cheese until smooth. Add the mayonnaise and sour cream and mix well. Fold in the green onions, jalapeños, and corn. Serve the dip with tortilla or corn chips.

Yum! My family loves corn and this corn dip. It doesn't last long around our house. This dip is especially pretty in a clear or white bowl and looks great in a holiday setting. —KR

Jacalyn Wright
Roswell, Georgia

Georgia Vidalia Onion-Cheese Mold

Makes 6 to 10 servings

20–24 pecan halves, toasted, plus 1 cup chopped pecans, toasted
4 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup mayonnaise
1 small Vidalia onion, chopped
3 dashes of hot pepper sauce
1 (12-ounce) jar strawberry preserves
Round butter crackers

Spray a 3 1/2- to 4-cup ring mold with nonstick cooking spray. Arrange the pecan halves in the ring mold.

Mix together the cheese, mayonnaise, chopped pecans, onion, and pepper sauce in a mixing bowl. Press the cheese mixture into the mold over the pecan halves. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours. Loosen the mold with a knife and invert onto a plate. Pour the strawberry preserves into the hole of the mold. Serve with the crackers.

Wonderful! When your company leaves you will find yourself eating the leftovers (if there are any) with a spoon. —JW

Christie King
Columbia, Tennessee

Tomato-Bacon Dip

Makes 15 to 20 servings

1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved or quartered
1 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup chopped green onion
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
Pinch of black pepper
1 pound bacon, cooked and crumbled
Crackers or toast squares, for serving

Stir together the tomatoes, mayonnaise, green onions, parsley, cheese, and pepper in a bowl. Add the bacon and mix. Serve at room temperature or chilled with crackers or toast squares.

I was catering an eightieth birthday party for my dad, but I had taken on a little more than I could handle. So, I decided to combine all the ingredients and just do a makeshift bacon dip. It was the hit of the party, and I had several requests for the recipe.
—CK

Fruit Salsa & Chips

Makes 8 to 10 servings

Salsa

- 1 cup fresh strawberries, stems removed
- 3 medium kiwis, peeled
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 medium orange, peeled and sectioned
- 1–2 bananas, cut up
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar

Chips

- 10 (8-inch) flour tortillas
- 1/4 cup melted butter or margarine
- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup sugar

For the fruit salsa, place the fruit in a food processor and pulse until chopped. Add the rest of the ingredients and stir. Refrigerate until ready to use.

For the chips, preheat the oven to 350°F. Line four baking sheets with aluminum foil. Cut each tortilla into eight triangular pieces. Brush the tortillas with melted butter and sprinkle them with cinnamon and sugar. Place the chips in a single layer on the baking sheets and bake for 15 minutes, or until crispy.

To serve, set out the fruit salsa and chips.



This is a very good and refreshing dish. Everyone loves it wherever I take it. It goes over well at showers and gatherings of any kind. —PW

Karen Joy Cook
Fresno, California

Wassail

Makes 2 to 2 1/4 gallons
(thirty-two to thirty-six 8-ounce cups)

2 cups sugar
8 cups water
1 tablespoon whole cloves
6 cinnamon sticks (about 3 inches long)
3 tablespoons chopped crystallized ginger
8 cups orange juice
3/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 gallon apple cider

Combine the sugar, water, cloves, cinnamon sticks, and crystallized ginger in a 12-quart soup pot. Heat to a boil. Decrease the heat and simmer for about 30 minutes. Remove from the heat, cover, and let stand for about 1 hour. Strain out the spices. Add both juices and the cider. Bring to the boiling point and then serve. Wassail can be stored in the refrigerator after it has cooled down; to serve again, just reheat it.

This holiday drink is a tradition in our family. We grew up with it as children and it is served in our homes now as well as at our family cabin each Christmas. —KJC

Mary Lois Engelbreit (Mary's mother)
Saint Louis, Missouri

Eggnog

Makes 6 quarts

1 dozen eggs
1 quart bourbon
3/4 cup (6 ounces) dark rum
2 cups sugar
8 cups (2 quarts) milk
1 pint heavy whipping cream

Separate the yolks and whites of the eggs into two mixing bowls. In a large bowl, beat the egg yolks until blended. Add the bourbon and rum as you beat. Continue beating and add the sugar and milk until blended. When completely blended, chill the mixture.

In the second bowl, beat the egg whites, using a mixer, until medium stiff. In a third bowl, whip the cream until stiff. Combine the bowls and mix everything together. Serve immediately.

Drink a lot of it. Call in sick to work. —MLE



All happiness depends on
a leisurely breakfast.

—John Gunther

Breakfasts & Breads



Quiche

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 prepared 9-inch pie crust (or prepared **Basic Pastry Crust**; recipe follows)

Filling

3 eggs

Pinch of ground nutmeg

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/2 cup milk

2 tablespoons butter or margarine

1 medium onion, chopped

1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained, and patted dry

1 cup shredded Swiss cheese

1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Pinch of dried basil

Pinch of dried marjoram

To make the pie crust, preheat the oven to 400°F. Spray a piece of aluminum foil with nonstick cook spray. Place the foil, sprayed side down, over the pie crust and gently press it into the pastry shell. Cover the foil with a layer of dried beans. Bake for 10 minutes. Carefully remove the foil and beans from the pie crust. Then, prick the shell with a fork and bake it for an additional 3 to 5 minutes, or until lightly browned. Let cool.

For the filling, preheat the oven to 350°F. Beat the eggs, nutmeg, salt and pepper, and milk in a large bowl and set aside. In a medium skillet, melt the butter. Cook the onion in the butter until translucent. Add the spinach to the onion. Remove the skillet from the heat and let it cool slightly. Add the spinach mixture to the bowl with the egg mixture and stir all of the ingredients together. Spoon the spinach mixture into the pie crust.

Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until it is set and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the quiche stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Basic Pastry Crust

1 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup plus 1 tablespoon shortening

2–3 tablespoons cold water

Combine the flour and salt in a bowl. Cut in the shortening with a pastry blender until the mixture resembles coarse cornmeal. Sprinkle the cold water evenly over the surface and mix with a fork until all of the dry ingredients are moistened. Shape into a ball and chill. On a floured surface, roll to fit a 9-inch pie pan. Proceed as recipe directs.



Roxanne Chan
Albany, California

Fiesta Frittata

Makes 4 to 6 servings as a main dish,
8 to 10 servings as an appetizer

1 cup creamy spinach dip
1 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon chopped chipotle pepper in adobo sauce
2 tablespoons minced green onion
2 tablespoons snipped fresh parsley
1/4 cup chopped roasted red bell peppers, drained
1/4 cup shredded pepper Jack cheese
8 eggs, separated
Salsa (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Oil a 12-inch ovenproof skillet. Combine the dip, sour cream, chipotle pepper, onion, parsley, bell peppers, cheese, and egg yolks in a large mixing bowl and stir until well mixed. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites with an electric mixer until soft peaks form, and then fold into the yolk mixture. Pour the mixture into the prepared skillet and bake uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the center is set and a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Cut the pie into slices and top each wedge with salsa, if desired.

Laura Drake
Des Moines, Iowa

Jalapeño Pie

Makes 26 servings

1 (12-ounce) jar sliced, pickled jalapeños
1 dozen eggs
8 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
Diced tomatoes, for garnish (optional)
Chopped green onion, for garnish (optional)
Sautéed, sliced mushrooms, for garnish (optional)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line an 8 by 12-inch jelly roll pan with aluminum foil and spray with nonstick cooking spray. Cover the bottom of the pan with jalapeño juice and place the jalapeños in a single layer evenly across the pan. (For a milder pie, use less jalapeño juice and scatter the jalapeños more sparsely.)

In a bowl, beat the eggs until blended and pour into the jelly roll pan. Cover the eggs and jalapeños with cheese until everything is covered. Bake uncovered until the cheese is bubbly. Cut into squares to serve. Garnish as desired with tomatoes, chopped green onion, or sautéed sliced mushrooms. This can be served hot or cold.

Carol Mussitsch
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Potato Pancakes

Makes 6 servings

12 russet or baking potatoes
6 eggs
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
2 cups vegetable oil, or as needed, for frying
1 (29-ounce) can sliced peaches, drained

Grate the potatoes by hand or use a food processor. Place the potatoes in a sieve and drain the excess liquid. In a large bowl, mix the potatoes, eggs, flour, and salt together.

Heat 1/8 inch of oil in a medium skillet over medium heat until the temperature of the oil is about 350°F. (Watch the oil carefully so it does not smoke.) Drop 2 to 3 tablespoons of the potato mixture into the skillet. Cook for 5 to 6 minutes, or until browned. Turn and cook on the other side until browned, about 5 minutes. Place the pancakes on a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Serve warm with peaches over the top of the pancakes.

Dad's Famous Stuffed French Toast

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 15 (1/2-inch) slices sourdough bread
- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 dozen eggs
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup or maple-flavored pancake syrup, plus more for serving, if desired
- 3 cups milk
- Confectioners' sugar, for dusting (optional)

Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cut the crusts from the bread and cube each slice. Spread a layer of the cubes on the bottom of the dish. Cut the cream cheese into small cubes and sprinkle over the bread cubes. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon of the cinnamon on top. Repeat with another layer of bread cubes, cream cheese, and 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon and set aside.

In a medium bowl, beat the eggs together for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the maple syrup, milk, and the remaining 1 teaspoon of cinnamon to the bowl. Beat together for 1 minute.

Pour the egg mixture over the bread cubes, allowing the liquid to soak into the bread. Press down with a spatula or spoon if needed to fully soak the bread. Cover the dish with aluminum foil and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Bake covered for 45 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for another 15 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the

center but not into the cheese comes out clean and the egg is not runny in the center. Let cool for 5 minutes and serve with additional warm syrup and a dusting of confectioners' sugar, if desired.

This is a special Christmas morning family favorite made by my husband. My four boys, almost all grown and off to college, can't wait to come home for this treat! It fills the house with the delicious aroma of cinnamon while we see what Santa Claus brought and open presents with all the family. When we are finished opening presents, our delicious breakfast is baked and ready to serve for the best Christmas breakfast ever! —KD

Paula Murphy
Sandwich, Massachusetts

Chocolate crêpes

& Vanilla Mascarpone Stuffed with Warm Berry Compote

.....
Makes 12 servings

Chocolate Crêpes

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 extra-large egg
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 cups whole milk
4–6 tablespoons butter or margarine

Berry compote

5 cups mixed fresh berries, such as strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, or raspberries
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons ground allspice
3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 1/2 cups frozen mixed berry medley

Vanilla mascarpone

16 ounces mascarpone, softened
1/2 cup granulated sugar

1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 vanilla beans, seeds scraped
1/4 cup honey
1 1/2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Vanilla sauce

1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
1 cup heavy whipping cream

The compote must be begun the day before serving. The crêpe batter may be mixed the day before; the vanilla sauce may also be cooked the day before and reheated before use.

To make the crêpe batter, bring the milk and egg to room temperature 30 minutes before mixing. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, cocoa, salt, egg, sugar, and milk. Refrigerate if not making the crêpes until the next day, then bring the batter to room temperature before cooking it.

Warm up the crêpe pan over low heat and lightly butter it. Pour about 1/4 cup of the batter into the pan or enough to swirl and coat it. Cook the crêpe for 2 to 3 minutes and then flip it over. Cook the crêpe on the other side for about 2 minutes.

Remove the crêpe from the skillet. Place the cooked crêpes in a pie dish between pieces of parchment paper to keep them from sticking together and invert another pie dish on top to keep them warm. Repeat with the remaining batter and be sure to butter the pan between crêpes. Makes 12 crêpes.

The night before serving, cut the fresh berries into bite-size pieces. Place the berries in a medium bowl and then cover and refrigerate them overnight.

In the morning, pour the sugar, allspice, and lemon juice over the berries and toss to coat. Place the frozen mixed berries on top and toss. Warm up

the mixture in the microwave on medium (50 percent) power for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the mixture is slightly warm and the flavors are blended.



To make the vanilla mascarpone, in a medium bowl, beat together all of the ingredients with a mixer. Once mixed, place the mixture in a piping bag with a large tip.

To make the vanilla sauce, mix together the sugar, syrup, and vanilla in a saucepan. Heat for a few minutes over medium heat, stirring frequently, until well blended, heated through, and the sugar has dissolved. Next, remove the pan from the heat, add the heavy whipping cream, and mix.

To assemble the crêpes, place one crêpe on a dish. On a one-quarter triangular wedge of the crêpe, place a heaping spoonful of berries (approximately 1/2 cup). Along the edge of another quarter of the crêpe adjacent to the first, pipe the mascarpone. Fold the crêpe in half so the

mascarpone is covering the fruit and it is “peeking” out of the crêpe. Fold again; the crêpe will be a triangle shape. Top with the vanilla sauce.

Leftover crêpes may be frozen and reheated in the oven for future use; they are delicious with ice cream.

An unforgettable breakfast! We operate Annabelle Bed and Breakfast on Cape Cod, so you could say that our “family” consists of about 1,100 guests each year from around the world! This recipe is one of our guests’ favorites and plates always come back clean! —PM

Pam Winckel
DeSoto, Missouri

Homemade Cheese Danishes

Makes 16 servings

- 2 (16.3-ounce) cans large buttermilk biscuits
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 egg
- 1 (21-ounce) can of your favorite fruit filling

Preheat the oven to 350°F. On a greased cookie sheet, place the biscuits and flatten the center of each with the palm of your hand to make a well.

In a medium bowl, beat together the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar, vanilla, and egg. In the well of each biscuit, place about 1 tablespoon of the cream cheese filling. Then top each biscuit with about 1 tablespoon of the fruit filling. Bake for 32 to 35 minutes.

I came up with this recipe on my own a long time ago. They are such a big hit everywhere I take them— they look like they came from a bakery shop and the taste is just sinful! —PW

Linda Gray
Fallbrook, California

Pull-Apart Caramel Buns

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 2 loaves frozen bread dough, thawed
- 1 (3.5-ounce) package noninstant butterscotch pudding
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Grease a 9 by 13-inch baking dish. Cut the bread dough into bite-size pieces and place into the dish. Sprinkle the butterscotch pudding on top of the bread. In a small saucepan, melt the butter and mix in the brown sugar. Bring it to a boil and add the cinnamon. Drizzle the butter mixture over the bread. Sprinkle the nuts on top. Cover with aluminum foil and let it rise in a warm area for 2 hours, or refrigerate overnight. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Uncover and bake the bread for 30 minutes. While it is still warm, flip the bread onto a serving dish.

This has a heavenly aroma while cooking that wafts through the house and draws everyone near—in anticipation! —LG

Kate Berg
Rogers, Arkansas

Ava's Poppy-Seed Bread

Makes two 9 by 5-inch loaves

1 1/2 cups milk
3 eggs
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 1/2 teaspoons almond extract
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 1/2 cups sugar
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 1/2 tablespoons poppy seeds

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease two 9 by 5-inch loaf pans. In a medium bowl, mix together the milk, eggs, vanilla and almond extracts, and oil; add the remaining ingredients except for the poppy seeds. Beat for 2 minutes. Stir in the poppy seeds. Divide the batter between the prepared loaf pans and bake for 1 hour.



Ann Deakers
San Diego, California

Share-the-Recipe

Coffee Cake

Makes 12 servings

1 (18.25-ounce) package yellow cake mix
1 (3.4-ounce) package vanilla instant pudding
1 teaspoon melted butter or margarine
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3/4 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup water
4 eggs
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup sugar

Topping

1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/3 cup milk

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9 by 13-inch baking dish. In a medium bowl, mix the cake mix, vanilla pudding, melted butter, vanilla, oil, and water until blended. Add the eggs one at a time and mix for 4 to 6 minutes. Pour the batter into the baking dish. In a small bowl, mix the cinnamon and sugar together and swirl it through the top of the cake until it is no longer visible. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes.

While the cake is baking, make the topping. In a medium bowl, mix the butter, vanilla, confectioners' sugar, and milk together.

When the cake is out of the oven, pour the mixture over the top while it is still warm.

Whenever I share this coffee cake, the recipient always asks for the recipe—hence the title. It's a family favorite, which we served as the groom's cake in the shape of Texas at my daughter's wedding. —AD

Richard Mittelhauser
Melbourne, Florida

Chocolate Zucchini Bread

Makes two 9 by 5-inch loaves

3 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
4 eggs
3 cups sugar
1 1/2 cups canola oil
3 (1-ounce) squares unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
3 cups coarsely grated zucchini
1 cup chopped nuts
1/2 cup chopped dates

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour two 9 by 5-inch loaf pans. In a medium bowl, sift the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon, then set aside. In a separate bowl, beat the eggs until frothy and slowly add the sugar and oil. Add the cooled chocolate and the vanilla and almond extracts to the egg mixture. Fold in the dry ingredients. Gently squeeze the excess moisture from the zucchini and add the zucchini, nuts, and dates to the batter. Divide and pour the batter into the prepared loaf pans. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the bread stand on a wire rack for 20 minutes before removing from the pans.

This is a third generation recipe that has been handed down for many years. It has been taken to many potluck dinners and cookouts and everyone asks for the recipe. —RM



Karen Uda
San Marcos, California

Pumpkin Bread

Makes two 8 by 4-inch loaves

1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup butter or margarine, softened
1 cup sugar
1 cup water
2 eggs
1 cup canned solid pumpkin

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease two 8 by 4-inch loaf pans. In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, nutmeg, ground cloves, and baking soda and set aside. In a medium bowl, cream together the butter and sugar. Add the water, eggs, and pumpkin and blend well. Slowly add the pumpkin mixture to the dry ingredients and blend well. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pans and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

If making one larger loaf, bake for 48 to 60 minutes, until a toothpick comes out clean.



When we lived in Connecticut, a dear friend of mine made the best pumpkin bread recipe I had ever eaten. It was from her great grandmother. I made a few changes and everyone loved it even more. Now it is a family favorite and my family can't wait to have it every fall. Fresh pumpkin even makes it better. Trust me, you will love it! —KU

Richard Mittelhauser
Melbourne, Florida

Sweet Potato Bread

Makes one 9 by 5-inch loaf

5 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 large, ripe banana, peeled and sliced into 1-inch pieces
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup dark corn syrup
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup evaporated milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup raisins

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spread 1 tablespoon of butter over the bottom and sides of a 9 by 5-inch loaf pan. Drop the sweet potatoes into a pot of lightly salted boiling water; cover and cook for 20 to 30 minutes, or until soft. Drain. Force the potatoes and banana through a ricer or food mill into a large mixing bowl. Add the remaining butter and beat until blended. Add the remaining ingredients and beat until blended. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf pan, place on a baking sheet, and bake for 1 1/2 hours, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. The top should be golden brown. Let the bread cool in the pan for 5 minutes and then remove it from the pan and let it cool completely on a wire rack.

I saw this recipe many years ago. Since I love sweet potatoes it was something to try. Then I noticed it had no flour in it. The

first time I tried the recipe I couldn't get it out of the loaf pan in one piece so I made some changes and my version became a family favorite around the holidays. —RM

Richard Mittelhauser
Melbourne, Florida

Zucchini Bread

Makes two 9 by 5-inch loaves

3 eggs
1 cup canola oil
2 cups sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups shredded zucchini
1 (8.25-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup chopped dates
1 cup chopped pecans

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease two 9 by 5-inch loaf pans. In a large bowl, beat the eggs, oil, sugar, and vanilla with an electric mixer, until thick. Stir in the remaining ingredients and mix well. Pour the batter into the two loaf pans and bake for 1 hour, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

This recipe was a favorite of my grandmother, mother, and now me. It's a wonderful way to use up that zucchini from the summer garden. And it tastes so good, too. —RM



Jane Nahgahgwon
Mount Pleasant, Michigan

Beer Bread

Makes one 9 by 5-inch loaf

- 3 cups self-rising flour, or 3 cups all-purpose flour plus 4 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer, at room temperature

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 by 5-inch loaf pan. In a medium bowl, combine all of the ingredients and mix until blended. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 1 hour.

I like to soften one stick of butter and add some honey to it. Honey butter is wonderful on this bread. I got introduced to beer bread when I was at a friend's house back when I was in high school. I have tried many recipes since and ended up changing each one slightly until I came up with the one I use now. —JN

Cindy Morgan
Houston, Texas

Mama Bivens's Muffins

Makes 12 muffins

1 1/4 cups sugar
1/2 cup shortening
2 eggs
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease or use paper liners in a twelve-cup muffin tin. In a medium bowl, cream together the sugar and shortening with an electric mixer. Add the eggs and blend well. In another bowl, blend together the flour and baking powder. Mix the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture, alternating with the milk. When the batter is thoroughly mixed, add the vanilla and blend. Divide the batter evenly among the prepared muffin cups. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes.

When my grandmother asked for this recipe years ago, my great-grandmother would only say a “pinch of this” or a “handful of that.” They had to get in the kitchen together to figure out the exact measurements! —CM



Worries go down better with soup.

—Jewish Proverb

Soups & Stews



Danielle Walter
Claremont, California

Grandma Boone's Potato Soup

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 teaspoons butter or margarine
1 medium yellow onion, chopped
6–8 mushrooms, sliced thinly
4 cups water
3–4 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 (10.75-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup
1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a small skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion and mushrooms and cook until soft; set aside. In a Dutch oven, bring the water to a boil and add the potatoes and the onion mixture. Cook the potatoes for 15 minutes, or until they are almost mushy. Add the cream of mushroom soup, milk, and salt and pepper and mix until blended. Simmer to blend the flavors, stirring occasionally.

My husband's grandmother never used a recipe, so I adapted what I observed her doing. —DW

Diane Disbrow
Collinsville, Illinois

Creamy Cauliflower Soup

Makes 6 to 8 servings

1 medium head cauliflower, broken into florets
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
3 cups chicken broth
2 cups half-and-half
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Chopped chives or green onions, for garnish

In a medium saucepan, cook the cauliflower in water until tender. Drain and chop coarsely. In a large saucepan, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook until tender. Add the flour and blend it in. Add the chicken broth, half-and-half, and Worcestershire sauce. Cook and stir until the mixture thickens slightly. Add the chopped cauliflower and bring to a boil. Stir in the cheese and heat until melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with a garnish of chopped chives or green onions.

Barb Thorsen
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Wild Rice Soup

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1/3 cup uncooked wild rice
4 cups chicken broth
1/3 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup diced celery
1/4 cup chopped green bell pepper
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup shredded carrot
1/4 cup sliced mushrooms
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 (2-ounce) jar chopped pimientos, drained
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
3/4 cup half-and-half
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Rinse the rice and drain. In a Dutch oven, combine the rice and broth, cover, and cook for 45 minutes, until the rice is tender. In a medium skillet, melt the butter and add the celery, green pepper, onion, carrot, and mushrooms. Cook for 10 minutes, or until the vegetables are crisp-tender. Add the flour to the skillet, stir, and cook for 2 minutes. To the rice in the Dutch oven, add the vegetables, pimientos, and the salt and pepper. Bring the soup to a boil and then decrease the heat. Stir in the half-and-half and cheese and cook for 2 minutes, or until the soup is hot and the cheese is melted.



This recipe reminds me of fun with family and friends and my ninety-year-old father who makes this soup for all of us to enjoy during cold Midwest winters. —BT

Roxanne Bloom
Schaumburg, Illinois

Beef-Barley Soup

Makes 10 servings

3 pounds boneless chuck roast
1 teaspoon coarse salt
10 cups water
2 pounds fresh carrots, peeled and chopped
1 large onion, chopped
1 pound fresh mushrooms
1/2 pound fresh green beans, trimmed
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 (7- to 10-ounce) packages vegetable-beef or barley soup mix
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Remove as much of the fat as possible from the roast and cut into chunks. In an 8-quart stockpot or Dutch oven, place the meat, salt, and water. Bring the mixture to a boil, uncovered, and skim off the fat that floats to the top. Add the carrots, onion, mushrooms, and green beans to the stockpot. Add the tomato sauce and garlic. Decrease the heat to a simmer and cook for about 1 hour. Next, add the soup mix, blend well, and continue to cook for 1 to 2 hours more, or until the meat is tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

It is an inexpensive soup and we used to have it as our main dish for supper. When I make it, I am reminded of many happy mealtimes in my parents' home! —RB



Eleanor Leap
Lansing, Michigan

Eleanor's Tomato Soup

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 teaspoons minced garlic
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
1 red bell pepper, seeded and minced
1 celery stalk, minced
2–4 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 (14.5- to 15-ounce) cans finely diced or crushed tomatoes
2 tablespoons dark brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried crushed rosemary
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup water
1 1/2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, cubed

In a 4-quart saucepan, cook the garlic, onion, bell pepper, and celery in the vegetable oil. Add the tomatoes, brown sugar, basil, rosemary, thyme, salt and pepper, and water and blend well. Simmer covered for 30 to 40 minutes, until the vegetables are soft. If still too chunky, mash with a handheld potato masher. Stir in the cream cheese and simmer for another 10 to 15 minutes, or until the cheese is thoroughly mixed and melted.

I created this recipe after having a tomato soup at a restaurant that was really different. My sewing group, the Loopy Hoopers,

always asks for it when we meet at my house in January for soup
tasting. —EL



Clara Buffington
Boise, Idaho

Peppery Potato Soup

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/2 onion, diced
3 celery stalks, sliced
1 clove garlic, minced
5–6 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
4 cups milk
3 (1 1/2-ounce) packages dried four-cheese sauce mix
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 cup shredded jalapeño cheese
3–4 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled

In a Dutch oven, melt the butter and add the onion, celery, and garlic. Cook until the onion is opaque, then add the potatoes. Add water just to the top of the potatoes. Over medium heat, bring the mixture to a boil and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are fork tender. Remove the Dutch oven from the heat and drain half the liquid. Return the Dutch oven to the stove and decrease the heat to low. Add the milk and blend well. Mix in the four-cheese sauce mix and blend. Simmer and stir until the soup begins to thicken. Slowly add the heavy cream and cheese. Stir the soup constantly until all of the ingredients are completely incorporated and the mixture just reaches a boil. Remove the soup from the heat, ladle it into bowls, and top it with the crumbled bacon.

Potato soup is a family favorite when the weather turns chilly. The four-cheese sauce mix in our version makes this potato soup easy, thick, and rich. And the jalapeño cheese gives it just the

right amount of warm, peppery flavor. Pair it with your favorite crusty bread or rolls and plan to stay in for the evening! —CB



Becky Hournbuckle
Bedford, Texas

Missionary Bean Soup

Makes 8 to 10 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 celery stalk, sliced
1 clove garlic, sliced
1/2 cup green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
5–6 hot dogs, sliced diagonally into 1-inch pieces (use as much as you prefer)
2 (15.5-ounce) cans pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 (14.5- to 15-ounce) can diced or crushed tomatoes, undrained
2 (14-ounce) cans chicken broth or water
2 teaspoons salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon dried basil

In a Dutch oven, heat the oil and add the onion, celery, garlic, and bell pepper. Cook until the vegetables are crisp-tender. Add the hot dogs and cook until they are brown. Add the pinto beans, tomatoes, and chicken broth. Heat the mixture to a boil and add the remaining ingredients. Simmer the soup for 15 to 30 minutes to blend the flavors.

**Missionary friends from Africa came to visit us unexpectedly.
Mother had some cooked pinto beans to which she quickly added**

canned tomatoes, chopped onions, and sliced wieners. It was a desperate creative attempt to make a meal out of not very much, but it was a hit. We have made it quite often on purpose since then. I have made many variations of this soup, depending on the ingredients at hand. —BH

Lynn Myers
Lake Stevens, Washington

Carrot Soup

Makes 4 servings as a side dish

1 tablespoon butter or margarine
3/4 cup chopped onion
1 cup sliced carrots
1/4 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
2 cloves garlic, crushed
3 cups chicken broth
1 cup cubed, peeled potatoes
2 small bay leaves
1/2 cup buttermilk
Pesto, for garnish

In a large saucepan, melt the butter. Cook the onion in the butter for 1 minute. Add the carrots, thyme, and garlic and cook for 10 minutes, or until tender but not browned. Add the broth, potatoes, and bay leaves. Heat to a boil and then decrease the heat. Cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the vegetables are very tender. Remove the bay leaves. Using a handheld blender, puree the soup until smooth. Add the buttermilk and heat through. Ladle the soup into bowls and top each serving with pesto, swirling to mix.

Phil Delano
Saint Louis, Missouri

Gazpacho à la Phil

Makes 8 to 10 servings

1 clove garlic
2 cups peeled, seeded, and chopped fresh tomatoes
1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped
1/2 cup seeded and diced green bell pepper
1/2 cup chopped green onion
1/4 cup chopped black olives
2 cups tomato juice
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar or red wine (optional)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Dash of hot pepper sauce

Cut the garlic in half and rub over the bottom and sides of a large bowl. Add the tomatoes, cucumber, green pepper, green onion, olives, tomato juice, olive oil, and vinegar, if using, to the bowl. Stir to blend well. Season with the salt, pepper, and hot pepper sauce to taste. Chill for at least 1 hour before serving.

Just a really good gazpacho! —PD

Beth Lauver
Saint Louis, Missouri

Italian Garden Soup

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1 large onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
4 cups chicken broth
1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
2 small zucchini, sliced thinly
1 1/2 cups thinly sliced carrots
1 1/2 cups chopped celery
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon dried basil
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Shredded Parmesan cheese, for garnish
Seasoned croutons, for garnish

In a Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, stirring often. Add the broth, tomatoes, vegetables, and seasonings. Cover and simmer for 20 to 30 minutes, until the vegetables are crisp tender, stirring occasionally. Serve hot in soup bowls and garnish with the Parmesan cheese and croutons.

This is a recipe from my grandmother that's perfect for using up extra veggies. When it cooks down, it gets so rich and flavorful. It's so healthy, and easy enough to make even on a weeknight. I like to double the batch and freeze it in smaller containers for quick lunches and dinners. —BL



Anny Cleven
Half Moon Bay, California

Uncle Bob's Irish Stew

Makes 6 servings

1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
3 pounds boneless lamb, cut into bite-size pieces
1/4–1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup chopped yellow onion
2 cups boiling water
2 cups dry red wine
6 new red potatoes, peeled and quartered
2 carrots, peeled and sliced 1/4 inch thick
2 parsnips, peeled and sliced 1/4 inch thick

Dumplings

2 cups biscuit mix
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon dried thyme
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
1/2 cup milk, heated to a boil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine 1/2 cup of the flour and the salt and pepper in a resealable plastic bag. Add the meat, seal the bag, and toss to coat the meat. In a Dutch oven, heat 1/4 cup of the oil. Add the meat and cook until browned, stirring

frequently and adding more oil if needed. Add the onion, boiling water, and red wine and blend well. Cover and simmer for 1 hour. Stir in the potatoes, carrots, and parsnips. Blend together the remaining 1 tablespoon of flour with 2 tablespoons of cold water into the stew. Stir again, cover, and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes.

While the stew is simmering, prepare the dumplings. In a medium bowl, mix the biscuit mix, nutmeg, thyme, and parsley. Add the warm milk, blend well, and set aside.



After the stew has simmered for 20 to 25 minutes, raise the heat to a low boil and stir the stew so it is well blended. Add salt and pepper to taste. By the heaping teaspoonful, drop the dumpling batter quickly into the lightly boiling stew. Cover and cook for 12 minutes. Ladle the stew into bowls and garnish with parsley.

Uncle Bob was my dad, Mary and Alexa's Uncle Bob. Which was funny because Mary and Alexa's dad was also a Bob, so we all had an Uncle Bob. Which leads me to a funny Brit saying, "Sure as Bob's your uncle!" Used commonly in the United Kingdom, it means that something is as sure as it can be, as everyone has an uncle named Bob.

Anyway here is my dad's recipe . . . Uncle Bob's Irish Stew with dumplings. And as he used to say, always tell the butcher that you are making stew and see that he doesn't have his thumb on the scale unless he means to contribute to the stew pot. —AC

Leslie Lundy
Champaign, Illinois

Chicken & Wild Rice Stew

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Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1 small yellow onion, chopped
1 (8-ounce) package mushrooms, sliced
1/2 cup slivered almonds
2 cups cooked shredded chicken
2 cups cooked wild rice
1 cup cooked white rice
2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 cup chicken broth
2 (26-ounce) cans condensed cream of chicken soup

In a 5-quart Dutch oven, melt the butter. Add the onion, mushrooms, and almonds. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes, or until the onion is translucent. Stir in the cooked chicken, wild rice, white rice, poultry seasoning, salt and pepper, and chicken broth. Add the undiluted cream of chicken soup and blend well. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 20 to 30 minutes, or until hot.

**My best compliment was when a friend told me that even her
children request this stew! —LL**

Sunday Lunch

Beef Stew

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 pounds beef stew meat, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, halved and sliced
- 1 cup dry sherry
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon spicy mustard
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2–3 sprigs fresh thyme, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 (8-ounce) package mushrooms, sliced
- 4 carrots, sliced
- 3 cups beef broth or stock
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Place the flour in a resealable plastic bag. Add the meat, seal, and toss the meat to coat. In an ovenproof Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the meat and cook until it is browned on all sides. Remove the meat from the pot and set aside in a bowl. In the same Dutch oven, add the onion and cook until browned and slightly caramelized. Deglaze the pot with the sherry and Worcestershire sauce, scraping up the bits from the bottom of the pot. Lower the heat and add the mustard, sugar,

garlic, thyme, rosemary, and salt and pepper. Heat to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes to let the liquids reduce slightly. Add the mushrooms and carrots and mix well. Add the beef and the juices from the bowl and blend well. Add the beef broth and tomato sauce. Bring the stew to a boil, cover, and transfer to the oven. Bake for 2 hours. If desired, thicken the stew by removing the lid for the last 15 minutes.

This recipe was originally devised as a means to impress a boyfriend I was dating. The relationship didn't last, but at least I have this recipe! —JS



One cannot think well,
love well, sleep well,
if one has not dined well.

—Virginia Woolf

Salads & Sides



Deborah Brotherton
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Spaghetti Salad

Makes 10 to 12 servings

1 (16-ounce) package uncooked spaghetti
2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
1 medium red onion, sliced
1 (8-ounce) bottle Italian salad dressing
1/4 cup McCormick Salad Supreme

This recipe needs to be prepared the day before serving.

Cook the spaghetti according to the package directions and drain.

In a large bowl, combine the spaghetti, tomatoes, green pepper, cucumber, and onion. Add the salad dressing and Salad Supreme. Mix and toss to blend the ingredients well. Cover and chill overnight in the refrigerator and the salad is ready to serve the next day.

This salad recipe is perfect for luncheons and dinners anywhere, work, church, social events, and it is so easy to make. It is a great spring and summer salad. —DB

JoAnna Daly
Orlando, Florida

Christmas Salad

Makes 4 to 6 servings

4 medium beets
2 tablespoons minced fresh dill
1 pint grape tomatoes
1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
3–4 green onions, chopped

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Wash the beets, trim down the stems to 1 to 2 inches in length, and place the beets on a baking sheet. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until tender. Let cool. Peel and cut into cubes. In a large bowl, combine the beets, dill, grape tomatoes, and cucumber and mix. Add the vinegar and oil and toss lightly. Serve in salad bowls and garnish with the green onion.

I named this salad the Christmas Salad because the dish is so vibrant in the Christmas colors of reds and greens. The dill resembles the Christmas tree and the tomatoes remind me of the decorations of bulbs on the tree during the holidays. Bon appétit!

—JD

Asian Slaw

Makes 10 servings

- 2 (3-ounce) packages ramen noodles (any flavor; discard seasoning packet)
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 (1-ounce) jar sesame seeds
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2–3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce, plus more to taste
- 3 pounds cabbage, chopped (regular or napa)
- 1 (2-ounce) package slivered almonds, toasted

While the ramen noodles are still in the package, crack them into small pieces. In a large skillet, melt the butter and add the ramen noodles and sesame seeds. Stir over medium heat until the noodles are golden brown and crunchy. Drain on paper towels. In a medium bowl, mix the oil, vinegar, sugar, and 1 tablespoon of soy sauce and stir well. Immediately before serving, toss the cabbage, noodle mixture, dressing, and almonds together in a large bowl. Add additional soy sauce to taste.

Denise Sakkestad
Hazlet, New Jersey

Stuffing Balls

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 1 (24-ounce) loaf whole wheat bread
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cubes chicken bouillon
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 1/3 cups plus 1/2 cup milk
- 1 (10.75-ounce) can cream of chicken soup
- 1 (10.75-ounce) can cream of celery soup

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Tear the bread into small pieces and place in a large bowl. In a saucepan, melt the butter and cook the celery, parsley, onion, and bouillon cubes. Add the egg and 1/2 cup of the milk. Pour the liquid over the bread and mix well. Form the mixture into fifteen 2-inch balls and place in the prepared dish. In a small bowl, mix together the cream of chicken soup, the cream of celery soup, and the remaining 1 1/3 cups of milk and pour over the stuffing balls. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 45 to 60 minutes.

Ardith McComb
Rolla, Missouri

Cauliflower & Broccoli Salad

Makes 6 to 8 servings

1 head cauliflower, broken into florets
1 head broccoli, broken into florets
1/2 cup sweetened, dried cranberries
1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
3–4 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 cup coleslaw dressing

In a large bowl, combine the cauliflower, broccoli, dried cranberries, pine nuts, and bacon. Add the coleslaw dressing a little at a time until the cauliflower and broccoli are coated. Refrigerate until serving.

I love quick-to-fix recipes. This one fits the bill, and it's healthy to boot. —AM

Janet Love
Saint Charles, Missouri

Tomato & Cucumber

Salad

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Makes 6 to 8 servings

3 tomatoes, cut into wedges
1 cucumber, seeded and sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
3 carrots, peeled and diced
4 celery stalks, diced
1 cup apple cider vinegar
2 1/2 cups water
1 1/2 cups sugar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, mix together the tomatoes, cucumber, onion, carrots, and celery and set aside. In a small bowl, mix together the apple cider vinegar, water, sugar, and salt and pepper to taste; stir until the sugar dissolves. Pour the liquid over the vegetables and toss lightly. Chill for at least 4 hours or overnight, stirring occasionally.

Phil Delano and Mary Engelbreit
Saint Louis, Missouri

Spinach Salad

Makes 8 servings

2 (6-ounce) packages baby spinach, stemmed
1 medium onion, halved and sliced thinly
3 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled
2 hard-cooked eggs
1/4 cup pitted, black olives, sliced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Mary's favorite salad dressing

1 cup olive oil
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
3 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 clove garlic, minced

To make the salad, in a large bowl, combine all of the ingredients and toss.

To make the dressing, in a jar, combine all of the ingredients and shake.

To serve, pour the salad dressing on top of the salad and toss to mix.

Variation: If desired, add bacon drippings, a dash of freshly squeezed lemon juice, and a pinch of paprika to the salad dressing.

This is the only salad Phil and my kids would eat because it was laced with bacon! Our son, Will, was a really picky eater as a kid

and he claims this salad opened up his mind to trying new foods. —
ME



Amy Dodson
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Oma's German Potato Salad

Makes 4 to 6 servings

8 red potatoes
1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste
1 small onion, diced
1/2 cup water
1 cube chicken bouillon
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1/2 cup vegetable oil
Freshly ground black pepper

In a large saucepan, cook the potatoes whole and unpeeled in boiling water. While the potatoes are cooking, sprinkle the bottom of a large bowl with the 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Add the onion to the bowl. Boil the 1/2 cup of water and add the bouillon cube, stirring to dissolve.

When the potatoes are tender, drain and let cool. Peel and slice the potatoes and add them to the large bowl. Pour the vinegar into the bowl. Next, add the oil and the bouillon mixture and mix. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Phyllis Galloway
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Green Chile Rice

Makes 6 to 8 servings

- 1 (4.5-ounce) can chopped green chiles, undrained
- 1 (16-ounce) container sour cream
- 3 cups cooked white rice
- 1 pound Monterey Jack cheese, sliced
- 2–3 cups shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a small bowl, mix together the green chiles and sour cream. Place about half of the rice in the baking dish. Add a layer of half of the sour cream mixture over the rice. Arrange about half of the Monterey Jack cheese over the sour cream. Repeat the layering once more, ending with the Monterey Jack cheese. Cover the top with the cheddar cheese.

Bake uncovered for 30 to 45 minutes, or until the cheese is bubbly and slightly brown. Let sit for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.

**This recipe came from my mother and has been a favorite for decades; I have no idea where it came from other than Mom. —
PG**

Jill Rosell
Springfield, Missouri

Old Settlers Beans

Makes 6 to 8 servings

1 pound ground beef
1/2 pound uncooked bacon, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup ketchup
1/4 cup barbecue sauce
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
2 tablespoons molasses
1/2–1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 (15-ounce) can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 (15.5-ounce) can butter beans, drained and rinsed
1 (15-ounce) can pork and beans

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a 4-quart Dutch oven, cook the ground beef until browned; drain and set aside. In the same pan, cook the bacon until crisp; drain and set aside. Using what remains of the bacon drippings in the pan, cook the onion until tender and drain. Return the ground beef, bacon, and onion to the Dutch oven, and add the remaining ingredients.

Bake uncovered for 45 minutes, or until heated through.



This is a very easy and tasty dish. It is great for picnics, potlucks, and winter evenings. It is tasty served warm or cold. It can be

simmered on the stovetop, baked in the oven, or cooked in the Crock-Pot. It is also wonderful to fix while out camping. —JR

Mindy Readshaw-Bloomberg
Venetia, Pennsylvania

Mimmy's Apple-Sausage-Cranberry Stuffing

Makes 25 servings

10 cups cubed white bread
4 cups cubed whole wheat bread
2 1/2 pounds ground pork sausage
2 cups chopped celery
2 tablespoons plus 3/4 teaspoon minced fresh sage
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary
1 1/4 teaspoons minced fresh thyme
3 Golden Delicious apples, cored and chopped
2 cups sweetened dried cranberries
3/4 cup minced fresh parsley
2 cups chicken broth or turkey stock
3 eggs
2/3 cup butter or margarine, melted

Preheat the oven to 350°F. On two large baking sheets, spread the white and whole wheat bread cubes in a single layer. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes, or until evenly toasted. Transfer the toasted bread cubes to a large baking pan.

In a large skillet, cook the sausage over medium heat, stirring to crumble until evenly browned. Add the celery, sage, rosemary, and thyme; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes to blend the flavors and drain.

Pour the sausage mixture over the bread in the large baking pan. Mix in the chopped apples, dried cranberries, and parsley. Drizzle with the chicken broth, eggs, and melted butter and mix with your hands.

Spray a 6-quart slow cooker with nonstick cooking spray. Spoon the stuffing into the slow cooker and cook on low for 5 to 7 hours. Stir once midway through cooking. If needed, sparingly add more broth if too dry.

This is a family tradition at Thanksgiving. I cook and serve it in a Crock-Pot . . . it makes it easy! Everyone loves this recipe. Often I am asked to make it at other times of the year. People crave it!
—MRB



Easy Spinach Soufflé

Makes 6 servings

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained, and patted dry
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1 1/2 cups small-curd cottage cheese
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 1 1/2-quart baking dish. In a large bowl, mix together the spinach, flour, eggs, and salt. Add the butter and both cheeses and blend well.

Pour the spinach mixture into the baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 15 minutes, until the top is slightly browned and bubbly.



Robin Kohut
Salem, Missouri

Banana-Pepper Potatoes

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Makes 5 to 6 servings

5–6 russet or baking potatoes, unpeeled, cut into 1-inch cubes
1 onion, quartered
1/2 cup chopped, seeded banana pepper
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened and sliced
2 teaspoons Greek seasoning, or to taste

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix together the potatoes, onion, and banana pepper. Add the butter and mix together. Add the Greek seasoning and toss.

Pour the potato mixture into the baking dish and cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.

Delicious . . . these are my favorite potatoes. I threw this recipe together on a camping trip and then later tried it in the oven. They are truly easy and delicious. —RK

Eugenia Dayton
East Lansing, Michigan

Baked Soybeans with Pork

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 cups dried soybeans
1/2 pound ham, bacon, or salt pork, chopped
3 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons molasses
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
Pinch of ground ginger
Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
Dash of Worcestershire sauce

Rinse and sort the beans, discarding any shriveled beans. Place the beans in an 8-quart stainless-steel saucepan. Cover the beans with about three times their volume of cold water. Soak overnight.

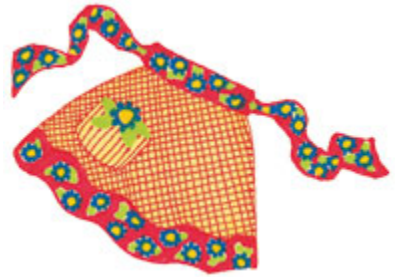
Drain and rinse the beans. Return the beans to the saucepan and cover with three times their volume of cold water. Heat to a boil over medium-high heat; decrease the heat and simmer for 2 hours, adding additional water if needed. Remove any hulls that might be floating. Drain and set the beans aside.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a skillet, cook the meat and onion until the meat is browned, stirring frequently and drain. In a large bowl, combine the soybeans, meat, and onion, and the rest of the ingredients. Spoon into a 9 by

13-inch baking dish. Add 3 cups of water or just enough to almost cover the ingredients in the baking dish. Bake uncovered for 4 to 5 hours, or until the beans are tender, checking and adding additional water as needed.

Note: Soybeans will stay a little firmer than the navy beans that are normally used for a baked bean dish.

My mom, Virginia Dayton, grew up on a farm in Fowlerville, Michigan, where large noonday meals were prepared for the hired help during harvest. Her parents immigrated from Belgium before WWII started. —ED



The only time to eat diet food
is while you're waiting
for the steak to cook.

—Julia Child

Main Dishes



Karen Joy Cook
Fresno, California

Mom's Piquant Sauce

Meat Loaf

Makes 5 to 6 servings

2/3 cup dried bread crumbs
1/2 cup milk
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
2 eggs, slightly beaten
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/8 teaspoon rubbed fresh sage

Piquant sauce

3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
1/3 cup ketchup
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon dry mustard

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 5-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, soak the bread crumbs in the milk until the crumbs soak up the milk. Add the ground beef, eggs, onion, salt, pepper, and sage. Mix with your hands until well blended. Place the mixture in the loaf pan, pat down firmly, and set aside.

To make the piquant sauce, mix together the brown sugar, ketchup, nutmeg, and dry mustard in a small bowl until smooth.

Pour the piquant sauce over the meat loaf. Bake uncovered for 1 1/2 hours. Carefully lift the meat loaf from the pan, leaving the grease behind, and place on a plate. Slice and serve hot.

This recipe was handed down from my grandmother, Gladys Ahfeld, to my mother, Mary Ruth Sands, and was a regular at our dinner table as I grew up. It quickly became a part of our menu as I raised our four children and has been passed on to my children as they marry. Everyone who has tried it raves over the unique piquant sauce that tops this meat loaf. I've never been able to eat another meat loaf recipe since! —XJC

¿'s Quizada

Makes 6 servings

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1/2 large onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon salt, and more to taste
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, and more to taste
4 banana peppers, seeded and sliced crosswise
1 jalapeño, seeded and sliced crosswise (optional)
8 Roma tomatoes, quartered
4 medium zucchini or yellow squash, sliced
1 1/2 cups fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into 3- to 4-inch pieces
1 cup frozen corn
Flour tortillas, for serving (optional)
Minced fresh cilantro, for serving (optional)
Shredded Colby cheese, for serving (optional)
Hot, cooked Spanish rice, for serving (optional)

In a Dutch oven, heat the vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook until the onion is translucent. Add the beef and cook. Add the cumin, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring frequently, until the meat is browned. Drain. Return the meat to the pan and add the peppers, jalapeño, if using, tomatoes, zucchini, green beans, and corn. Cook until the vegetables are crisp tender. Cover and lower the heat. Simmer for 10 minutes, checking to make sure the meat is not burning. Stir the mixture

and add the salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for another 15 minutes, or until the zucchini looks translucent.

Serve hot in a shallow soup bowl to capture all of the juices. Accompany with warmed flour tortillas and/or garnish with fresh cilantro and Colby cheese, if desired. This can also be served over Spanish rice, if desired.

Quizada (gee sah da) is the Mexican equivalent of “stir-fry.” Meat cooked with vegetables and spices is served as a simple dish with tortillas and is sometimes accompanied by Spanish rice. I “made up” this version and use it as a fast and easy “I-just-got-home-from-work-and-everybody-is-starving-now” meal. —EB

Stephani Nelson
Olympia, Washington

The Best Barbecued Beef

Makes 10 to 12 servings

1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1 cup onion, chopped
3 1/2 pounds boneless chuck roast
1 1/2 cups ketchup
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon Liquid Smoke
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
1 dozen sandwich buns

Melt the butter in a skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until it is translucent; set aside. Place the chuck roast in a slow cooker.

In a large bowl, combine the remaining ingredients, except for the sandwich buns, and blend well. Add the onion to the sauce. Pour the barbecue sauce over the chuck roast. Cover and cook on low for 8 to 10 hours or on high for 4 to 5 hours.

Remove the chuck roast from the slow cooker when done. Shred the meat with a fork and return to the slow cooker. Stir the meat evenly to coat with the barbecue sauce.

Serve the meat on sandwich buns and top with the remaining barbecue sauce, if desired.



This recipe is one of my family's favorites. I came up with it when we were in the middle of moving and I needed something to feed everyone who was helping in the move. I knew how to make barbecue sauce and I thought, Why not try it with the meat in a Crock-Pot? Through the years I have readjusted this recipe as I'm always adding some new ingredient to it! —SN

Marye Lynn Lepo
Haslett, Michigan

Meatball Oven Dinner

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Meatballs

- 1 pound ground beef
 - 2 tablespoons chopped onion
 - 1/2 cup dried bread crumbs
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons prepared mustard
 - 1 teaspoon chili powder
 - 1/2 cup milk (scant)
 - 1 egg, beaten slightly
 - 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
-
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
 - 1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
 - 3 small potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes
 - 2 onions, quartered
 - 3–4 carrots, sliced 1/2 inch thick

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, mix together all of the meatball ingredients, except for the flour, and form into balls about 2 inches in diameter. Roll the meatballs in the flour. In a skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Brown the meatballs in the butter. Place the meatballs in a 9 by 13-inch baking dish.

Add the tomato sauce to the skillet and blend well with the drippings. Pour the mixture over the meatballs and arrange the potatoes, onions, and carrots around the meatballs.

Cover the baking dish with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour.

Our family favorite is a one-pot meatball oven dinner. It's been served by four generations of cooks, including my grandmother, mother, myself, and now two daughters. It's tasty and includes an entire meal in one large casserole dish—just add a salad and you're all set. Yum! —MLL

Harvest Dinner Pie

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 1 (9-inch) deep-dish unbaked pie crust (**Basic Pastry Crust**, [see here](#))
- 1 pound ground beef or turkey
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped
- Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 cups shredded Mexican cheese
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 small zucchini or yellow squash, sliced thinly
- 2 large tomatoes, sliced

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the pie crust in a pie pan. In a large skillet, cook the ground beef, onion, salt, pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon of the garlic powder until the meat is browned, stirring frequently, and drain.

Spread the beef mixture inside the pie crust. Layer 1 cup of the cheese on top of the beef. Layer the mushrooms on top of the cheese and sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon of garlic powder. Layer the zucchini on top of the mushrooms, overlapping as necessary. Sprinkle another pinch of salt and pepper evenly over the zucchini. Layer the tomatoes over the zucchini, overlapping as necessary.

Bake for 20 minutes. Cover the top with the remaining 1 cup cheese, being careful to keep the cheese in the pan. Bake for another 20 minutes, until the cheese is melted and browning. Let cool slightly before serving.

Well, September means a plethora of zucchini squash and tomatoes. I love those flavors together and have always liked making healthy one-dish recipes. It's great for supper or for lunch with my friends, served with a green salad, a fruit and cottage cheese salad, or a cantaloupe garnish. —SS

Danyel's Meat Loaf

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 pound ground beef
1 cup crushed cornflakes
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 envelope onion soup mix (from a 2-ounce box)

Sauce

1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
1/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup ketchup
1/3 cup barbecue sauce
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray an 8 by 4-inch loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine the ground beef, crushed cornflakes, milk, Worcestershire sauce, and onion soup mix. Place the mixture in the loaf pan, press down firmly, and bake for 30 minutes.

While the meat loaf is baking, make the sauce. In a medium bowl, add the vinegar, sugar, ketchup, barbecue sauce, and Worcestershire sauce and blend well.

When the meat loaf has baked for 30 minutes, carefully drain the grease, if necessary. Pour the sauce over the meat loaf and bake for another 30 minutes, or until done. Slice and serve hot.

This started out as my mom's meat loaf. I have played with it over the years and now I make it fairly consistently. My family loves it and my husband even requested that I make it for Christmas last year. —DG

Liane Rowe
Ball Groun, Georgia

Mom's Homemade Lasagne

Makes 6 to 12 servings

Tomato sauce

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound Italian turkey sausage
- 1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons dried minced onion
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon honey

Cheese filling

- 1 egg, beaten slightly
- 1 (15-ounce) container ricotta cheese
- 4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 (8-ounce) package oven-ready lasagna noodles (whole wheat, if desired)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

To make the tomato sauce: In a skillet, cook the beef and sausage over medium heat, stirring frequently, until they are no longer pink. In a Dutch oven, add the tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, and tomato paste and blend well. Add the onion, oregano, basil, salt, pepper, garlic powder, fennel seeds, parsley, and honey and blend well. Drain and rinse the meat. Add the meat to the tomato mixture and mix well. Heat over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking.

To make the cheese filling: In a medium bowl, mix the egg and ricotta until smooth. Add 3 cups of the mozzarella and the Parmesan to the ricotta mixture and mix together.

Spread 1 cup of the prepared tomato sauce on the bottom of the baking dish. Layer with the noodles, one-third of the remaining tomato sauce, and then one-third of the cheese mixture. Repeat the layers two more times, ending with the cheese. Top with the remaining cup of mozzarella and cover the dish with aluminum foil.

Bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.



Beth Lauver
Saint Louis, Missouri

Parmesan Meatballs

Makes about 30 meatballs

2 pounds ground beef
1/2 cup milk
1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
4 slices white bread, crusts removed
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
6 tablespoons dried parsley flakes
4 eggs, beaten

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a jelly-roll pan with aluminum foil. In a large bowl, mix together all of the ingredients. Shape the mixture into balls about 1 1/2 inches in diameter, about the size of a golf ball. Bake uncovered for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the meatballs are no longer pink inside.

When cooled, the meatballs can be frozen in batches.

My Irish grandmother passed down this recipe for the best Italian meatballs I've ever had. Her six daughters-in-law and now her grandchildren make these as a staple for a quick meal. —
BL

Nancy Jensen
Wheaton, Illinois

Kaldolmar

{Swedish Stuffed Cabbage}

Makes 6 servings

1 medium head cabbage
1 1/4 pounds ground chuck
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
2 cups cooked white rice
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 egg, beaten
2 teaspoons ground cloves
2 cups milk
1 cup packed brown sugar

Fill a 6 1/2-quart Dutch oven about three-quarters full with water and bring to a boil. Slice the cabbage in half from top to bottom and discard the middle core. Separate the leaves and place the cabbage in the boiling water. Cook for 5 to 6 minutes, or until the cabbage is soft but not limp. Drain the cabbage leaves. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together the ground chuck, onion, rice, salt, egg, and 1 teaspoon of the ground cloves. In a large saucepan with a lid, whisk together the milk, the remaining 1 teaspoon of ground cloves, and the brown sugar.

After the cabbage leaves have cooled, divide the meat mixture into six portions and roll each into a ball (should be baseball size or slightly smaller). Place one ball in the center of two or three cabbage leaves, folding the leaves neatly around the meat.

Place the cabbage rolls into the saucepan with the milk sauce. Cover and cook over low heat for about 1 hour, or until the beef is done and no longer pink. (The cabbage rolls should be simmering but not boiling, so watch the heat carefully.) Halfway through the cooking time, baste the rolls with the milk gravy from the pan.

This recipe has been handed down in our family for three generations now. I think it will be cherished by generations to come. My mother made this dish for us often while we were growing up. As children, we enjoyed this recipe and welcomed its delicious aroma on a cold winter evening. Mom always cooked it in a cast-iron skillet, but any large saucepan works fine. —NJ

Macaroni au Gratin

Makes 8 to 10 servings

- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 cups uncooked elbow macaroni
- 3 cups shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

In a Dutch oven over medium-high heat, cook the ground beef, stirring frequently, until the meat is browned, and drain. Add the onion and bell pepper and cook until tender, stirring frequently. Add the diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, garlic, ketchup, oregano, Italian seasoning, Worcestershire sauce, and salt and pepper and mix well. Simmer the sauce for 30 minutes and set aside.

Cook the macaroni according to the package directions; drain.

Spoon the meat mixture into the prepared pan. Add the macaroni and 2 cups of the cheddar cheese and stir well. Top with the remaining cheese.

Bake uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the cheese is slightly browned.

This gratin is a potluck dish that my family has been enjoying ever since my children were small. It is still their favorite and most requested meal. This recipe has been handed down from one generation to another in our family. —CM

Brandon Hieber
Chicago, Illinois

Tomatillo & Steak Chili

Makes 10 to 12 servings

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 1/2 pounds beef stew meat
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 large yellow onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
12 fresh tomatillos, husks removed, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 cup dry white wine
1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes
2 (15-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
1 (15-ounce) can spicy chili beans
1 (15-ounce) can mild chili beans
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 (28-ounce) can whole tomatillos
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
2 avocados
1/2 cup water

In a Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the beef and cook until the meat is browned, stirring frequently. Season the meat with salt and pepper. Drain and set the meat aside.

In the same Dutch oven, cook the onion, bell pepper, fresh tomatillos, and garlic until tender. Deglaze the skillet with the white wine.

Add the stew meat, tomatoes, and three types of beans and mix well. Add the chili powder and cumin and stir. Bring the mixture to a boil and then lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 4 hours. Stir occasionally, breaking down the whole tomatoes.

In a blender, puree the canned tomatillos until smooth. Add the puree and the cilantro to the chili. Check the seasoning as the chili simmers and add salt and pepper, if needed.

Before serving, peel, pit, and place the avocados in the work bowl of a food processor or in a blender. Add the water and puree until smooth. Add the puree to the chili. Simmer for another 5 minutes and serve hot.

Richard Mittelhauser
Melbourne, Florida

Spicy Goulash

Makes 4 to 6 servings

3 cups uncooked elbow macaroni
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chiles
1 (14.5-ounce) can stewed tomatoes with onions, celery, and green pepper
1 tablespoon sugar
Dash of hot pepper sauce
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
1 cup fresh bread crumbs
1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cook the macaroni as directed on the package. Drain and set aside.

In a large skillet, cook the ground beef, onion, and garlic until the beef is browned, stirring frequently. Drain and spoon into the baking dish. Add the Worcestershire sauce, diced tomatoes, stewed tomatoes, sugar, hot sauce, and salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the macaroni. Top with the Parmesan cheese. Combine the bread crumbs and melted butter; sprinkle over the casserole. Bake uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes, or until heated through.

I took a standard goulash recipe and made a lot of changes to it to get it spicier. Lucky for me, I wrote down the changes as it came out really good! —RM



Rebecca McBee
Hedgesville, West Virginia

Patience's Secret Recipe

Meatballs

Makes 12 servings

3 pounds ground beef
1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 cup chopped celery
1 1/2 cups fresh bread crumbs
3/4 cup ketchup
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 10 by 14-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine the ground beef, onion, celery, bread crumbs, ketchup, eggs, salt, pepper, and garlic powder and mix well. Roll the mixture into meatballs about 1 1/2 inches in diameter (about the size of golf balls) and place them in the baking dish. Bake uncovered for 35 to 45 minutes, or until well browned.

Mix together the brown sugar, tomato sauce, and Worcester-shire sauce. Pour over the baked meatballs and return to the oven for an additional 15 to 20 minutes.

This recipe belonged to my late mother, Patience Marie McBee.

Anywhere she took a pot of these meatballs, somebody always begged her for the recipe. The only recipients of the real recipe were my sister and me. —RM

Karen Pauer
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Kay's Cabbage Spaghetti

Makes 6 servings

1/2 pound ground beef
1/2 pound ground pork sausage
1/2 cup seeded and chopped green bell pepper
1/2 cup chopped onion
5 cups thinly sliced cabbage
1 (10.75-ounce) can condensed tomato soup
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 2-quart baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a skillet, cook the ground beef and sausage for 5 minutes. Add the green pepper and onion to the skillet and cook for another 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Drain and spoon the meat and vegetables into the prepared baking dish. Add the cabbage and mix well. Add the tomato soup and tomato sauce to the baking dish and mix well.

Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes, or until the cabbage is cooked.

Dan Lorenz
Raleigh, North Carolina

Grandma Carrie's Hot Dish

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 pounds ground beef
1 onion, chopped
1 pound uncooked bacon
2 (16-ounce) cans pork and beans
2 (15-ounce) cans butter beans, drained and rinsed
2 (15-ounce) cans kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1/2 cup ketchup
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon Liquid Smoke
1 teaspoon prepared mustard

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a skillet, cook the ground beef and onion, stirring frequently, until the meat is no longer pink. Drain the meat and set aside. In the same skillet, cook the bacon. Let cool on a paper towel to absorb the grease, then crumble. In the prepared baking dish, combine all of the ingredients and mix well. Bake uncovered for 45 minutes, or until heated through.

Jacqueline Woodard
Lebanon, Tennessee

Family Favorite

Red Beans & Rice

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 pounds fully cooked Polish sausage, sliced 1 inch thick
1/2 tablespoon Cajun seasoning
1 green bell pepper, chopped
6–8 green onions (green and white parts), diced
4 (15-ounce) cans dark red kidney beans, undrained
2–3 cups hot cooked rice

In a Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the Polish sausage and brown. Sprinkle with the Cajun seasoning. Remove the sausage from the pan and set aside. In the same pan, add the green pepper and cook, stirring frequently, for 1 minute. Add the green onion and cook for 1 minute. Add the sausage and the beans. Mix well, scraping the drippings from the bottom of the pan. Bring to a boil, cover, and lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer for 30 minutes.

To serve, place the hot cooked rice in a bowl and ladle the red beans over the top.

Jan Faught
Harlingen, Texas

Sausage-Sauerkraut Dinner

Makes 6 servings

- 1 (28-ounce) can sauerkraut, drained
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion
- 3 cups peeled and thinly sliced potatoes
- 2 cooking apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
- 1 pound fully cooked Polish sausage, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Pinch of freshly ground black pepper
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups chicken broth

Rinse the sauerkraut in cold water and drain well. Place half of the sauerkraut in a large Dutch oven. Layer with half of the onion, potatoes, apples, and sausage. Sprinkle with pepper. Repeat the layering with the remaining halves of the ingredients. Add the garlic to the chicken broth and pour the broth into the Dutch oven. Cover and bake in an unpreheated 325°F oven for 2 to 2 1/2 hours, or until the potatoes are tender.

This recipe, a family favorite, was prepared originally twenty-five years ago. And it is a great dish to take to a potluck dinner.
—JF

Betty Rose Chapman
Richmond, Kentucky

Barbecued Pork Roast with Kraut

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 pounds pork loin roast
Pinch of dried oregano
Pinch of dried basil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
4–6 medium potatoes, peeled and halved
1 (14.5-ounce) can sauerkraut, drained
2 large onions, sliced thickly
1 (18-ounce) bottle barbecue sauce

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Brown the roast in the oil, turning to brown evenly. Place the roast in a roaster or a Dutch oven and sprinkle it with oregano, basil, and salt and pepper. Place the potatoes at one end of the roaster. Place the sauerkraut at the other end. Distribute the onion evenly on top of the potatoes, meat, and sauerkraut. Pour the barbecue sauce over the top, cover, and bake for 2 to 3 hours.

Serve the roast sliced with the potatoes and sauerkraut, leaving the onions on top.

My husband, the late “Grandpa Charlie,” loved being innovative in the kitchen. Our family loves family dinners, celebrating birthdays and holidays, and even just having dinner together. Grandpa Charlie loved all these ingredients so he decided to experiment with them and came up with this outrageously delicious combination. It was an instant success and one the whole family loves and continues to use for those special dinners. —BRC



PERFECTO.

Jean Bellow
Salt Lake City, Utah

Sausage Lasagne

Makes 6 to 8 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
2–3 cloves garlic, minced
3/4 cup chopped yellow onion
1 (15-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
1/2 pound bulk Italian sausage
1/2 cup chopped mushrooms (optional)
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons Italian seasonings
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
1 pound shredded mozzarella cheese
1 (15-ounce) container ricotta cheese
1/2 cup frozen spinach, thawed, drained, and patted dry
1 (8-ounce) package oven-ready lasagna noodles
1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, onion, and mushrooms. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring frequently, until soft. Add the tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, sugar, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes and simmer. In a medium skillet, cook the Italian sausage, stirring frequently until browned and cooked through. Add the sausage to the tomato mixture, blend well, and simmer for 30 minutes.

In a medium bowl, combine the mozzarella and ricotta cheeses.

While assembling the lasagne, preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Add enough of the tomato sauce to cover the bottom of the dish. Layer with the lasagna noodles. Next, add a layer of the cheese mixture and then a layer of spinach. Starting with the tomato sauce, repeat the layer two more times. Top with the Parmesan cheese.

Cover the dish with aluminum foil and place on a baking sheet. Bake for 45 to 60 minutes, or until cooked through.

Peppy Pasta

Makes 4 servings

- 8 ounces angel hair (capellini) pasta
- 1 large tomato, chopped
- 1 (3.5-ounce) package sliced pepperoni
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 (2 1/2-ounce) can sliced black olives, drained
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 (4-ounce) can sliced mushrooms, drained
- 1 (6.5-ounce) jar marinated artichoke hearts, drained, and chopped

Cook the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and set aside. Meanwhile, in a large serving bowl, combine the tomato, pepperoni, Parmesan cheese, olives, oil, salt, garlic powder, mushrooms, and artichoke hearts. Add the cooked pasta to the tomato mixture and toss to coat.

If you are looking for a quick and yummy recipe that the family will love, this is it . . . my family requests it weekly and I'm always happy to oblige as it is a meal you literally fix in minutes.
—JT

Ann Rice
Monrovia, California

Sausage Casserole

Makes 6 servings

- 1 red onion, chopped
- 1/2 pound uncooked bacon, chopped
- 4 knockwurst or garlic-flavored fully cooked sausages, sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 4 uncooked bratwurst, sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 4 frankfurters, sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 1 (14- to 16-ounce) fully cooked Polish sausage, sliced into 1-inch pieces
- 8–10 red potatoes, cooked just until tender, then halved
- 1 (12-ounce) can beer

In a Dutch oven, cook the red onion and bacon, until the onion is translucent and the bacon is crisp; drain. Add the sausages and potatoes. Pour the beer into the Dutch oven and cover. Simmer for 45 to 60 minutes, or until the sausages are cooked through.

My grandfather, Henry Michael, built my character and value system while teaching me to cook. My favorite recipe, Sausage Casserole, reminds me of the times we shared and the profound impact he has had on my ability to balance volunteer activities amid a full-time career. —RR

Mary Case
Everett, Washington

Hot Chicken Pasta Salad

Makes 6 servings

Dressing

1/3 cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
4–6 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup chopped fresh basil, or 2 heaping tablespoons dried
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 (12-ounce) package tricolor rotini pasta or garden spirals
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and cubed
6 green onions, chopped
1 (6-ounce) can large, pitted black olives
1 cup walnut pieces, toasted
3 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped coarsely
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

In a medium bowl, combine all of the dressing ingredients and mix well; set aside. Cook the pasta according to the package directions and drain.

In a large bowl, combine the drained pasta with the dressing and toss to coat. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Serve warm, but it is good cold or reheated.

Hot Chicken Pasta Salad is an excellent main dish family favorite for a family gathering or even a potluck. It is exceptional hot for dinner, but it is also excellent the next day cold packed in your lunch bag. I serve this with soft breadsticks and fruit kebabs for a nutritional yet satisfying meal! —MC



Judy Andersen
Maumelle, Arkansas

Poppy Seed Chicken Strips

Makes 4 servings

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
32 round butter crackers
2 tablespoons poppy seeds
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cut each chicken breast into four or five strips of about the same thickness. Place the crackers in a sealable plastic bag and crush, using a rolling pin. Add the poppy seeds to the crumbs and mix well.

Pour the butter into a 9 by 13-inch baking dish.

Drop the chicken strips into the crumb bag one at a time and coat evenly with crumbs. Place each coated strip in the baking dish. Continue until all the strips are coated and are in the pan. Sprinkle any excess crumbs over the top. Bake for 20 minutes. For extra browning, increase the oven temperature to 450°F for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, or until done.

**I created this recipe for Sunday dinner to please my
granddaughters. They helped to make the strips and they all
loved eating them. —JA**

Phil Delano
Saint Louis, Missouri

Chicken Limón

Makes 4 servings

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper
Pinch of garlic powder
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
3/4 cup chicken broth
3/4 cup white wine
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Combine the flour, salt and pepper, and garlic powder in a resealable plastic bag. Add the chicken, seal, and toss it to coat. In a skillet over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the chicken and cook for 4 to 5 minutes per side, or until cooked through. Transfer the chicken to a plate and cover.

In the same skillet, place the onion and mushrooms and cook until tender. Add the broth, white wine, and lemon juice and mix well. Return the chicken to the pan. Boil until the majority of the wine cooks off and the sauce thickens a bit, about 15 minutes.

Malinda Blevins
Tallahassee, Florida

Chicken & Broccoli Casserole

Makes 8 servings

2 (10-ounce) packages frozen broccoli florets
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and diced
1 (10 3/4-ounce) cream of chicken soup
1 (10 3/4-ounce) cream of celery soup
1 cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon lemon juice
3/4 teaspoon curry powder
3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup toasted fresh bread crumbs
1 tablespoon butter or margarine, melted

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a medium saucepan, cook the broccoli according to the package directions, drain, and place in the baking dish. Place the chicken on top of the broccoli.

In a medium bowl, combine together the undiluted soups, mayonnaise, lemon juice, and curry powder and blend well. Pour the mixture over the chicken and cover with the cheese. In a small bowl, toss the bread crumbs with the butter and then sprinkle over the cheese.

Bake uncovered for 30 minutes.

When my husband and I were first married, we would babysit for someone I worked with. She would have the casserole in the

oven waiting for us. I have made it hundreds of times. Our kids like it; we double and freeze it in separate containers. It is loved by new parents, grieving friends, and sick neighbors. Add a loaf of bread and it is the perfect dinner; pop it in the oven and bake. —

MB

Janice Elder
Charlotte, North Carolina

Vodka-Spiked Chicken & Pasta Rustica

Makes 4 servings

8 ounces cooked penne pasta
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1 cup good-quality vodka
2 cups prepared tomato pasta sauce
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 cup coarsely chopped, pitted kalamata olives
1 cup firmly packed stemmed fresh baby spinach
1 cup roasted red peppers, drained and chopped
1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
2 Roma tomatoes, seeded and finely diced
Fresh basil, for garnish

Prepare the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat and add the chicken. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes, turning once, or until golden brown, tender, and cooked through. Transfer the chicken from the pan to a cutting board and let cool for 5 minutes before cutting into bite-size pieces. Set aside.

In the same skillet, melt the butter, scraping up any browned bits on the bottom of the skillet for added flavor. Add the red pepper flakes and cook for 30 seconds. Add the vodka and boil for 2 minutes. Stir in the pasta sauce and heavy cream, stirring well. Add salt and pepper to taste, lower the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.

In a large bowl, combine the pasta with the tomato sauce and toss to coat. Add the chicken, olives, spinach, roasted red peppers, and grated cheese and mix well. Serve hot in shallow serving bowls and garnish with the diced tomatoes and fresh basil.

A very popular dish in my kitchen—guests frequently request the recipe for this one! The addition of vodka and red pepper flakes elevates this pasta dish to new levels. —JF

Elaine Polino
Allamonte Springs, Florida

Chicken Marsala

Elaine Style

Makes 4 servings

1 (16-ounce) package angel hair pasta
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 tablespoons olive oil
2–3 tablespoons butter or margarine
1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
1/2 cup marsala wine
1/2 cup chicken broth or stock
1 tablespoon chicken demiglaze or base

Prepare the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

Pound the chicken breasts thin. Combine the flour, salt, and pepper in a resealable plastic bag. Add the chicken, seal, and toss it to coat. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the olive oil and butter. Add the chicken and cook until brown, on one side, 4 to 5 minutes. Turn over the chicken and add the mushrooms around the chicken. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes on the second side. Add the marsala wine and boil for 30 seconds. Add the chicken broth and demiglaze. Stir to incorporate. Lower the heat to low and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, or until the sauce is thick. Serve hot with the chicken over the angel hair pasta.



My husband has always enjoyed veal marsala so I decided to experiment with cooking chicken using marsala wine. I spent some time tweaking it because my family enjoyed it, especially my grandchildren. I often make it with whole wheat angel hair pasta and we use the excess marsala sauce over the pasta. —EP

Michele Chisholm
Lexington, South Carolina

Auntie Lynda's Comfort Chicken Casserole

Makes two 9 by 13-inch dishes,
approximately 24 servings

6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and shredded
4 cups chicken broth
2 (26-ounce) cans cream of chicken soup
5 cups uncooked instant white rice
2 (16-ounce) containers sour cream
2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese
2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2 cups butter or margarine
1 (16-ounce) box round butter crackers, crushed

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray two 9 by 13-inch baking dishes with nonstick cooking spray. In an extra-large bowl, mix together the cooked chicken, chicken broth, cream of chicken soup, rice, sour cream, cheddar cheese, garlic, and salt and pepper to taste. Divide the mixture between the two prepared dishes.

In a large saucepan, melt the butter over low heat. Turn off the heat; add the crushed crackers and stir until evenly coated. Spread the mixture as a topping over the casseroles. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.



This is my favorite dish my BFF, Lynda, makes. I tweaked it and named the dish to remind me of her. When my family is worn out, it's cold outside, and we need some comfort food, they all ask for it. It's been great to serve at parties, to bring as a covered dish, and to give as a dinner to a special family in need of meals.

—me

Anny Cleven
Half Moon Bay, California

Anny's Land-a-Man

Coeq au Vin

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 (3–4 pound) chicken
4 cups orange juice
1/2 cup butter or margarine, sliced
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon dried thyme
6–8 green onions, trimmed
2 bay leaves
1 pound small red potatoes, peeled
1 (16-ounce) package baby carrots
1 pound fresh pearl onions, peeled
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 (8-ounce) packages button mushrooms, trimmed and sliced
3 cups dry red wine
2 cubes chicken bouillon
1/2 cup boiling water

Place the chicken in a deep bowl. Pour the orange juice over the chicken and soak for 15 minutes. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Drain the chicken and place it in a roasting pan. Discard the orange juice. Using a paring knife, gently lift the skin of the chicken and place the butter slices evenly under the skin. Drizzle the chicken with olive oil and salt and pepper it. Sprinkle the

chicken with the thyme. Place the greens onions, bulb ends first, into the chicken cavity with 1 bay leaf.

Place the potatoes and carrots around the chicken, edging some slightly underneath and elevating the chicken. Place the pearl onions among the potatoes and carrots. Top with the minced garlic. Place the mushrooms over the vegetables. Pour the red wine into the roasting pan. Dissolve the bouillon cube in the boiling water. Add the prepared bouillon and the other bay leaf. Cover and roast for 1 1/2 hours, or until the juices run clear and a meat thermometer inserted into the breasts registers 170°F. Baste once midway through cooking. Discard the bay leaves before serving.

Twenty or so years ago, I prepared a traditional Sunday dinner for my boyfriend. It was one of those remarkable October days, high blue sky, an apple crisp day. He told me how much the meal reminded him of Sunday dinner with his family; he really became quite touched by my effort. —AC

Heather Mellstrom
Phoenix, Arizona

Sun-Dried Tomato & Chicken Pasta

Makes 4 servings

8 ounces whole wheat spaghetti
1 (7-ounce) jar sun-dried tomatoes
1 pound chicken tenders
3/4 medium red onion, sliced thinly
1 (6-ounce) package spinach
1 cup golden raisins
1/2 cup pine nuts, toasted
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Shredded Parmesan cheese, for garnish
Chopped fresh basil, for garnish

Cook the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

Remove the sun-dried tomatoes from the jar and reserve their oil. Slice the tomatoes and set aside.

In a skillet over medium heat, heat the oil from the sun-dried tomatoes. Add the chicken and brown it for 5 to 6 minutes, until cooked through and no longer pink inside. Remove the chicken and set aside. Using the same skillet, lower the heat and add the onion. Cook until the onion is tender. Add the sun-dried tomatoes, spinach, golden raisins, and return the chicken to the skillet. Cook until the spinach is wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the pasta to the skillet and a little bit of water to moisten, if necessary. Add the pine nuts and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve hot in bowls and garnish with the Parmesan cheese and basil.

This pasta recipe is a go-to favorite! I have cooked this for family, friends, neighbors, church gatherings, you name it—it always gets the same reaction: everyone loves it and must have the recipe. The best thing about it is it's quick and easy, and that allows you, the cook, to spend more time mingling with your guests rather than messing around in the kitchen. Bon appétit! —AM

Rebecca Watson
Montclair, Virginia

Rebecca's Chicken

Makes 6 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
8 chicken tenders
1/2 medium onion, chopped
1 tablespoon chopped garlic
1/2 cup mango salsa
Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
1/2 cup pitted and halved green olives
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup fresh spinach
Sliced almonds, toasted, for garnish
Cooked rice or couscous, for serving (optional)

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the chicken, onion, and garlic and cook for 5 to 6 minutes, or until the chicken is browned and fully cooked. Add the salsa, lemon zest and juice, cilantro, green olives, and salt. Lower the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 7 to 10 minutes. Using a spatula, break the chicken into bite-size pieces.

Add the spinach and stir for 1 to 2 minutes, until the spinach is tender. Garnish with the almonds and serve alone or over rice or couscous, if desired.

One hectic evening, after one of those crazy Mom days, when bedtime was long gone, the kids were starving, and my husband long past due, I threw together an unusual assortment of things from the fridge and we collapsed at the table to eat. Quiet descended, and then one by one family members looked at me. “What is this?” “This is incredible!” “Where did you get this recipe?” It has been a family favorite ever since. —RW

Susan Zwer
Orlando, Florida

Chicken

with Capers & Couscous

Makes 4 servings

2 tablespoons butter or margarine
3 cloves garlic, minced
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 cup dry white wine
1 1/4 cups chicken broth
1 1/2 teaspoons chopped fresh marjoram
2 tablespoons capers, drained
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
3/4 cup shredded Asiago cheese
1 (10-ounce) package uncooked couscous

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt the butter. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Add the chicken breasts and cook on one side for 2 minutes. Turn them over and sprinkle the lemon zest on the chicken breasts while the second side cooks for 2 minutes. Add the lemon juice, white wine, 1/4 cup chicken broth, and marjoram to the pan. Bring to a boil, cover, and lower the heat to medium-low for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the chicken is done. Add the capers, cover, and continue to cook for 2 minutes. Top each of the chicken breasts with 1/2 tablespoon of parsley and sprinkle 1/2 cup of the cheese over the breasts. Cover and cook for 2 minutes, until the cheese melts.

Meanwhile, cook the couscous according to the package directions, substituting 1 cup of chicken broth for 1 cup of water. When the couscous is ready, fluff with a fork, add 1/4 cup of the Asiago cheese and stir.

Serve the chicken alongside the couscous. Top both with juices from the pan and sprinkle additional Asiago cheese over the couscous, if desired.

My husband enjoys creating new recipes. One of his experiments turned out so well that I started writing out the recipe as we were eating it. It combines lots of the flavors we love—capers, fresh herbs, and lemon. Couscous adds a nice finish. Serve it with a fresh salad and your favorite Chardonnay. —SZ

Chicken-Noodle Casserole

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 (16-ounce) bag wide uncooked egg noodles
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1–2 tablespoons olive oil
4–6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 cloves garlic, minced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup dry sherry (optional)
1/2 cup chicken broth
2 (10.75-ounce) cans golden mushroom soup

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Cook the egg noodles according to the package directions, drain, and pour into the baking dish. Sprinkle the cayenne over the egg noodles.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the chicken breasts and garlic and cook for 5 minutes. Turn and brown the other side for an additional 5 minutes. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Transfer the chicken from the skillet to the baking dish, on top of the noodles.

In the same skillet, add the sherry, if using, and chicken broth to deglaze the skillet. Add the golden mushroom soup and continue to deglaze. Pour the liquid over the chicken and noodles in the baking dish.

Create an aluminum foil tent over the chicken and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the tent and continue to bake for another 15 minutes, or until the

chicken is cooked through and nicely browned.

This is a special collaboration between two great friends. We wanted to share a great meal on a cold winter evening. It worked out so well it has become a family favorite! —PW



Aline Landry
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Herbes de Provence

Chicken over Pasta

Makes 4 servings

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/4 cup herbes de Provence
1 (16-ounce) package uncooked spaghetti
2–3 cloves garlic, chopped
2–3 tablespoons olive oil
4–5 Roma tomatoes, seeded and diced
1/2–3/4 cup fat-free half-and-half
1–2 tablespoons butter or margarine
Freshly shredded Parmesan cheese, for garnish
1–2 tablespoons freshly chopped flat-leaf parsley, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place the chicken in a 9 by 13-inch baking dish; season with salt and pepper. Add 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of the herbes de Provence. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes, or until the juices run clear and the chicken is fully cooked. Cook the spaghetti according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

In a cold skillet, combine the garlic and olive oil. Over medium heat, cook the garlic for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomatoes, salt and pepper to taste, and the remaining 2 tablespoons of herbes de Provence. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the tomatoes are soft. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of lemon juice and cook for another 1 to 2 minutes. Add the half-and-half and butter. Cook until the butter is melted.

Serve the pasta topped with the sauce from the skillet and garnish with the Parmesan cheese and parsley. Place the chicken breasts alongside the pasta.

Enjoy! I created this recipe because it is fast and easy, but most of all, because it is delicious. Most everyone loves chicken and pasta, but together, they are a great combination. —AL

Stir-Fry

with Peanut Sauce

Makes 4 servings

- 1 (7-ounce) package rice noodles
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 2 cups vegetables (a combination of shredded cabbage, sliced carrots, and frozen edamame, thawed, is recommended)
- 2 cups cooked and shredded chicken breast
- Chopped peanuts, for garnish (optional)
- Sesame seeds, for garnish (optional)
- Chow mein noodles, for garnish (optional)

Cook the rice noodles according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the water and peanut butter. Add the soy sauce, mustard, and ginger and whisk together the sauce until smooth.

In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the oil. Add the onion and cook until it is translucent. Add the vegetables, chicken, and noodles and mix well. Pour the sauce into the skillet and stir until well combined and heated through.

Serve warm in bowls and garnish, if desired, with the peanuts, sesame seeds, or chow mein noodles.

My husband and I love pad thai and chicken satay from Thai restaurants. I adapted this recipe for a meal that is quick and healthy enough for us to make at home on a weeknight. He says he now likes it better than the real thing! Rice or ramen noodles can be substituted for the rice noodles. —BL

Chicken Potpie

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 1 (15-ounce) package unbaked double pie crusts
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon celery salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 cup diced cooked chicken
- 1 cup frozen green peas, thawed and drained
- 1 cup diced cooked carrots

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Place one of the pie crusts in a 9-inch pie plate. In a skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until tender. Add the flour and blend well. Cook for 1 minute and then gradually add the chicken broth, stirring until smooth. Lower the heat and stir constantly, until the mixture is thick and bubbly. Add the salt, celery salt, and pepper and blend well. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Arrange the chicken, peas, and carrots in the pie crust. Pour the sauce over the top of the chicken and vegetables and cover the pie with the remaining pie crust. Press the pie crust edges together and trim the excess crust. Make three to four slits in the top of the crust to vent and bake for 20 minutes, or until the crust is golden and the filling is hot.

I am happy to have you include this yummy recipe in anything,
Mary! This is my family's all-time favorite comfort food! —JF



Spinach & Tuna Patties

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Makes 8 patties

1 package frozen spinach, thawed, drained, and patted dry
1 (6.4-ounce) pouch cooked tuna
1 small tomato, seeded and diced
1 clove garlic, diced
1/2 (3-ounce) jar capers, drained
Juice from 1/2 lemon
1 (4-ounce) can sliced mushrooms, drained
2 green onions, sliced
1 large sweet banana pepper, seeded and chopped
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup shredded mixed Parmesan and Romano cheese
1/2 cup Italian seasoned dried bread crumbs
1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon prepared horseradish (optional)
1/4 cup frozen corn, thawed (optional)
1/4 cup bacon bits (optional)
1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted (optional)
1 (1.5- to 2-ounce) package lemon herb sauce mix

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 10 by 15-inch jelly-roll pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a large bowl, mix together all of the ingredients, except for the sauce mix (add optional ingredients here). With wet hands, shape the

mixture into eight patties. Place the patties on the prepared baking pan. Bake for 40 minutes, or until the patties are slightly browned on top.

Prepare the sauce mix according to the package directions. Serve the patties warm with the sauce on top.

I made up this recipe when I had stuff to eat but didn't know what I really wanted until I pulled out the ingredients and thought, Let's just put some stuff together and see where it goes. It is filling and very tasty. —BL

Vivian Chaplin
Deltona, Florida

Gordon's Lobster Newburg

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1 pound lobster meat, cooked
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup cream sherry
Pinch of paprika
1 1/2 cups half-and-half
1 (5-ounce) jar pimiento cheese spread
4 egg yolks
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Toast triangles

Cut the lobster meat into bite-size pieces. In a skillet over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the lobster and cook until the heated through. Add the sherry and cook uncovered until the sherry has been reduced, 5 to 10 minutes. Add the paprika, mix well, and set aside.

In the top of a double boiler over simmering water, combine the half-and-half and pimiento cheese and heat. Place the egg yolks in a small bowl. When the half-and-half mixture is hot, blend a small quantity of the half-and-half into the egg yolks to temper the yolks. Add the yolks to the half-and-half mixture slowly and stir until smooth. Add the lobster and blend well. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve in small bowls with toast triangles on the side.

My late husband, Gordon, and I had eaten lobster Newburg at different restaurants and then Gordon worked with the recipe and came up with the pimiento cheese addition. It gave that special oomph that was needed. Every restaurant we ate the Newburg in after that did not compare at all to our recipe.

It was tradition to have this fabulous Newburg dinner on Christmas Day in Connecticut. It was a gourmet meal to eat on that special day and it did not take a long time to prepare and serve. I served it with French fries or Tater Tots and corn. —UC

Not Your Momma's Tuna

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cups uncooked rotini pasta
1/2 teaspoon olive oil
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup seeded and chopped green bell pepper
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup chicken broth
1 cup milk
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 teaspoon poultry seasoning
1/2 cup shredded Colby Jack cheese
1 (12-ounce) can tuna, drained

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Cook the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and rinse with cold water. Toss the pasta with the olive oil to separate and set aside.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion, celery, and green pepper and cook, stirring frequently, for 3 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Stir in the flour and cook until blended. Add the broth and milk, stirring until it thickens. Add the dry mustard, poultry seasoning, and half of the cheese; heat until the cheese melts. Remove the skillet from the heat and stir in the tuna and pasta.

Spray an 8-inch square baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the mixture into the dish and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Bake uncovered for 15 to 25 minutes, or until heated through. Serve hot.

I created this recipe because I love tuna dishes but the ones I had tried were so very boring. I also believe we eat too much processed food so that made me want to create this dish by cooking like my grandmother and mother did—from scratch! This is a super variation that children and husbands will look forward to eating.
—PW

Roxanne Chan
Albany, California

Salmon Sauté

with Tapenade Topping

Makes 4 servings

1 tablespoon olive oil
4 salmon fillets (approximately 1 pound total)
1/4 cup olive tapenade
1/4 cup plain yogurt
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley, plus sprigs for garnish
2 tablespoons minced green onion
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Chopped Roma tomatoes, for garnish

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the salmon and cook for 4 minutes, turning once. Lower the heat, cover, and cook for 4 more minutes, or until the salmon is cooked through. Transfer the salmon to a platter and cover with aluminum foil to keep warm.

In the same skillet, combine the tapenade, yogurt, parsley, onion, and pepper and gently heat through.

Spoon the topping over the salmon and garnish with the tomatoes and parsley sprigs.

This recipe is quick, easy, nutritious, and delicious. It is a good illustration of combining fresh produce and sustainable fish with the convenience of products like tapenade and yogurt for an everyday easy and nutritious meal. —RC



Linda Trotier
Chicago, Illinois

Nutty Cauliflower & Sun-Dried Tomato Pasta

Makes 6 servings

1 (13.25-ounce) package whole wheat penne pasta
6 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium head cauliflower, broken into florets, steamed until crisp tender
1/4 cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained
1/2 cup half-and-half
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, plus extra for serving
1/4 cup chopped walnuts or pine nuts, toasted
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cook the pasta according to the package directions, drain, and set aside.

In a large deep skillet or Dutch oven, heat 3 tablespoons of the olive oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, until the onion is translucent. Add the cauliflower and sun-dried tomatoes and heat through. Stir in the pasta, along with the additional 3 tablespoons of olive oil, and the half-and-half and cheese. Simmer for 3 to 4 minutes over very low heat, stirring occasionally. Stir in the toasted nuts. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve immediately and garnish with extra cheese.

I was short on time, had a taste for pasta, and wanted to use up a head of cauliflower I had on hand. It turned out to be a huge hit! I sometimes add leftover rotisserie chicken or chicken sausage to add extra protein. —LT

Penne

with Artichoke Hearts, Sun-Dried Tomatoes & Herbs

Makes 4 to 6 servings

1/2 cup sliced dry-packed sun-dried tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped coarsely
2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes, undrained
1/4 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
1/2 cup sliced pitted kalamata olives
1 (16-ounce) package penne pasta
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
1 (4-ounce) container crumbled feta cheese
Salt

In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup of water to a boil. Add the sun-dried tomatoes to the boiling water. Remove from the heat, allow to stand for 10 minutes to reconstitute, then drain well.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onion and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is soft. Add the artichokes and cook for 2 minutes. Add the sun-dried tomatoes and cook for

2 minutes. Add the diced tomatoes, thyme, oregano, marjoram, and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper and blend well. Lower the heat to medium, cover, and cook for 6 minutes. Add the kalamata olives, cover, and cook for 4 additional minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to the package directions. Drain, return it to the pot, and stir in the vegetable mixture, parsley, and basil. Add about three-quarters of the feta and stir. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve warm and garnish with the additional feta.

My husband has a great taste for combining some of our favorite flavors with fresh herbs from our garden. There is nothing like the fragrance and taste of herbs that go straight from the garden to this dish. —SZ

Vegetable Chili

Makes 8 servings

1/4 cup olive oil
2–3 large zucchini, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
2 medium onions, diced
1 sweet red bell pepper, seeded and cut into 3/4-inch cubes
1 sweet yellow bell pepper, seeded and cut into 3/4-inch cubes
2–3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch cubes
2 large carrots, grated
4 stalks celery, sliced
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 (28-ounce) cans crushed tomatoes
1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon cayenne
1 (1 1/4-ounce) package chili seasoning
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 bay leaf
Hot, cooked rice, for serving (optional)

Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven. Add the zucchini, onions, peppers, potatoes, carrots, and celery and cook, stirring frequently, until crisp tender, about 15 minutes. Place the vegetables in a 6-quart slow cooker.

Stir in the remaining ingredients, except for the rice. Cover and cook on low for 5 to 7 hours, or until cooked thoroughly. Remove the bay leaf before serving.

Serve warm alone or with the hot cooked rice, if desired.

The recipe originated a few years ago when my husband could not eat meat but loved his mom's chili. So I came up with a chili that tasted good even without the meat. I took my mother-in-law's recipe, omitted the meat, and added a few other ingredients of my own to create the vegetable chili. My husband loves it and doesn't even miss the meat. —EM



At the end of every diet,
the path curves back
toward the trough.

—Mason Cooley

Desserts



Mary Engelbreit and Phil Delano
Saint Louis, Missouri

Margie's Cheesecake

Makes one 9-inch cake

Crust

1 cup graham cracker crumbs
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted

Filling

2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sugar
3 eggs

Topping

2 cups sour cream
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Whipped cream, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 9-inch springform pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a small bowl, combine the crust ingredients and mix well. Spread in the bottom of the springform pan.

In a medium bowl, combine the filling ingredients and beat until smooth. Spread the mixture on top of the crust. Bake for 20 minutes, then remove

from the oven and let cool for 1 hour.

For the topping, preheat the oven to 475°F. In a medium bowl, combine the sour cream, sugar, and vanilla and mix well. Top the cake with the mixture. Bake for 10 minutes. Let the cheesecake cool completely for 1 hour. When cool, cover in plastic wrap and chill for 2 to 3 hours before serving.

Serve cold and garnish with whipped cream.

Margie lived across from us when I was a little girl. She was an amazing baker, almost a scientist—blending, mixing, whipping, and folding ingredients perfectly. We always looked forward to her visits with something sweet in tow. This became a favorite among the neighbors, but I am certain no one's cheesecake ever tasted like Margie's. Today, it is still the only cheesecake I make.
—ME

Christina Michele Miller
Buckeye, Arizona

Violet's Pumpkin Cake

Makes one 10-inch cake

1 cup vegetable oil
1 (15-ounce) can solid pumpkin
3 eggs
3 cups sugar
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

French vanilla whipped topping or whipped cream, for frosting (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch Bundt pan. In a large bowl, add the vegetable oil, pumpkin puree, and eggs and blend well. Add the remaining ingredients to the bowl and mix until well blended.

Pour the batter into the prepared Bundt pan. Bake for 60 to 75 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Remove from the oven and turn out onto a plate. Cover with plastic wrap until cool to hold in the moisture. When cool, frost with French vanilla whipped topping or whipped cream, if desired.

My father and I won second place with this recipe in a father and daughter baking contest at Patton Bixby Elementary School when I was in the first grade in 1972. And, my mother made this recipe every Christmas season. She made one for the mail carriers, various neighborhood businesses, neighbors, and friends throughout the years. After my mom passed away, my dad has kept the tradition alive, as do I. It will always be part of my family's heritage. I hope this recipe unfolds many family memories for you and yours. —EMM

Corinne Christensen
Commerce City, Colorado

Mom's Chocolate Birthday Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup water
1/2 cup buttermilk
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Frosting

1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1/2 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 (16-ounce) box confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease and flour a 9 by 13-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking soda, and cinnamon. In a small saucepan, combine the butter, cocoa, and water and heat until the mixture is warm and the butter is melted. Pour the warmed liquid into the dry ingredients and blend well. Add the buttermilk and blend well. Add the eggs and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Pour into the prepared baking pan and bake

for 17 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

While the cake is baking, make the frosting. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine the butter, buttermilk, and cocoa and heat through. Add the confectioners' sugar and vanilla and blend well. Spread the frosting on the cake while it is warm. Slice and serve.

**This recipe was the gift of several moms at the kindergarten school where I taught music, PE, and art to 250 five-year-olds. —
CC**



Donna Harper
Pensacola, Florida

Meme's Cream Cheese Pound Cake

Makes one 10-inch cake

2 cups (1 pound) butter, softened
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
6 eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
3 cups sugar
3 cups cake flour

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 10-inch tube pan with a removable bottom and cut waxed paper to line the bottom. Dust with flour.

In a large bowl, beat together the butter and cream cheese. Add the eggs one at a time, mixing well after each one. Add the vanilla, sugar, and cake flour and mix completely.

Bake for 75 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Slice and serve warm.

I have baked this cake for the past thirty-seven years and I am still requested over and over to bring it to every gathering. —DH

Joyce Walker
Arlington Heights, Illinois

Five-Minute Chocolate Mug Cake

Makes 1 serving

1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1 egg
3 tablespoons milk
3 tablespoons oil
3 tablespoons semisweet chocolate chips (optional)
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a large microwavable coffee cup, combine the flour, sugar, and cocoa powder and mix well. Add the egg and mix thoroughly. Pour in the milk and oil and blend well. Add the chocolate chips, if using, and vanilla and mix well.

Place the coffee mug in the microwave and microwave on high (100 percent) power for 3 minutes. Allow to cool slightly and serve in the coffee cup or on a plate.

This cake is so quick and easy to make and uses ingredients that most cooks would have on hand. It is good for those sudden chocolate cravings! —JW

Rebecca Clark
Hammond, Louisiana

Orange-Walnut Cake

with Brandy Syrup

Makes one 10-inch cake

2 cups buttermilk baking mix
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon freshly grated or ground nutmeg
4 eggs, at room temperature
1 cup milk
1 cup vegetable oil
1 cup sugar
1 cup finely chopped walnuts
1 tablespoon finely grated orange zest

Brandy syrup

1 cup sugar
1 cup orange juice
1 cup brandy

Whipped cream, for garnish

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter a 10-inch springform pan. In a medium bowl, combine the buttermilk baking mix, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. In a large bowl, beat the eggs one at a time until smooth. Add the milk and vegetable oil and blend well. Add the sugar

and blend until smooth. Add the dry ingredients and beat until smooth. Gently fold in the walnuts and orange zest.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 30 to 45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

While the cake is baking, prepare the brandy syrup. In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar, orange juice, and brandy and blend. Heat over low heat, stirring frequently, until the sugar dissolves and the mixture boils. Remove the saucepan from the heat and let cool.

Pour the syrup over the hot cake. Let the cake cool for 15 minutes in the pan and then remove the sides of the pan. Let cool completely, cut into wedges, and serve with a garnish of whipped cream.

Alexa Anderson
Saint Louis, Missouri

Goosey Butter Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

- 1 (16-ounce) package pound cake mix
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 1 (16-ounce) box confectioners' sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, blend the cake mix, two of the eggs, and butter. Pour the batter into an ungreased 9 by 13-inch baking dish. In a medium bowl, beat the cream cheese, the remaining 2 eggs, the vanilla, and all but 2 tablespoons of the confectioners' sugar. Pour the mixture on top of the batter. Bake for 15 minutes. Top with the reserved 2 tablespoons of confectioners' sugar and bake for an additional 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

This is really a Saint Louis tradition. It is Mary's all-time favorite dessert, and although it is customary to serve pies at holiday gatherings, we serve Goosey Butter Cake instead. —AA

Joette Pitcher
South Jordan, Utah

Crunchy Peach & Berry Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

- 1 (18.25-ounce) box white cake mix
- 1 egg
- 1 (29-ounce) can sliced peaches in heavy syrup
- 2 cups berries of choice
- 2 cups granola
- French vanilla ice cream (optional)

Preheat the oven according to the directions on the cake mix package. Grease a 9 by 13-inch baking pan.

In a medium bowl, combine the cake mix, egg, and peaches with their liquid and blend well. Pour the batter into the prepared baking pan. Sprinkle the berries and granola on top of the batter.

Bake according to the directions on the cake mix package.

Serve warm with a scoop of French vanilla ice cream, if desired.

This recipe is one of our favorites, topped with French vanilla ice cream or fresh whipped cream. —JP

Margaret Doolittle
Mason, Michigan

Grandma DeCamp's Ginger Cake

Makes one-inch square cake

1 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup shortening
1/2 cup cold water
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups all-purpose flour

Frosting

1/2 cup butter or margarine
1 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup milk
1 3/4 cups confectioners' sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan. In a large bowl, beat together the brown sugar, shortening, and water. Add the baking soda, baking powder, ginger, salt, and flour and mix well. The batter will be very stiff. Spread in the prepared pan.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely.

When the cake has cooled, make the frosting. In a medium saucepan, melt the butter and stir in the brown sugar. Heat to a boil and boil for 2 minutes,

stirring constantly. Stir in the milk and bring to a boil again. Remove from the heat and let cool just until warm. Stir in the confectioners' sugar and beat until the frosting reaches a spreading consistency. Spread the frosting on the cooled cake. (Use the frosting upon making, as it will set quickly.) Slice and serve.

This favorite recipe was handed down through our family from my great-grandmother, Caroline DeCamp, who was a Michigan farm wife in the mid-1880s. This dense and delicious cake was always on hand in her farm kitchen for the men in the family to eat as they did the early morning chores, tiding them over until they could come back to the house for breakfast. My daughter, Katie, now forty-one, has requested it since childhood as her birthday cake! —MD

Sam Guinn
Gig Harbor, Washington

Wine Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

- 1 (18.25-ounce) box spice cake mix
- 1 (3.4-ounce) box vanilla instant pudding mix
- 3/4 cup cream sherry
- 3/4 cup oil
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Icing

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup cream sherry

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 by 13-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, mix together the cake mix, pudding mix, sherry, oil, eggs, nutmeg, and cinnamon at medium speed for 4 minutes, until blended thoroughly. Pour the batter into the prepared baking pan. Bake for 30 minutes, or until the cake springs back when you touch it. Let the cake cool in the pan for 5 minutes.

While the cake bakes, in a small bowl mix together the confectioners' sugar and sherry until smooth. Poke the warm cake with a fork several times and drizzle the icing over the cake. Slice and serve warm.

My family and friends absolutely love this cake and ask for it all the time. Since you serve it warm, it's a great dessert to make at

the last minute. Just mix it up, cook it while you're eating dinner,
and voilà, dessert is served! —SG



Annetta Milhon
Grand Island, Nebraska

Pineapple Sheet Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

2 eggs
2 teaspoons baking soda
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple, with juice
2 cups sugar

Icing

1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted and cooled
1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9 by 13-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, mix together the eggs, baking soda, flour, pineapple with its juice, and sugar until smooth. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 25 to 35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

While the cake is baking, make the icing. In a medium bowl, beat together the butter, cream cheese, and confectioners' sugar. Spread the icing on the warm cake. Slice and serve.

Paula Kerr
Sherwood, Arkansas

Sweet & Simple Applesauce Pie

Makes 6 servings

10–15 medium Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
1 cup red-hot cinnamon candies
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
1 (9-inch) refrigerated unbaked single pie crusts
Pinch of ground cinnamon

Place the sliced apples in a large slow cooker. Add the red-hots, water, and 1/2 cup of the sugar. Cook on low for 5 to 7 hours, or until the apples are tender.

Unroll the pie crust and place it on a baking sheet. Sprinkle the remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar and the cinnamon on top of the pie crust. Bake according to the package directions. Let cool and then break the pie crust into pieces. Place the broken pieces into six dessert dishes.

When the apples have completely cooked down, use a potato masher to mash them into a slightly chunky applesauce. Divide the mixture equally and spoon on top of the pie crust pieces. Sprinkle with cinnamon and serve warm.

Wendie Johnson
Cook, Nebraska

Papa's German Apple Cake

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

3 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup shortening
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 eggs
3/4 cup milk
4 apples of choice, peeled, cored, and sliced thinly
1/2 cup butter or margarine, sliced

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9 by 13-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, brown sugar, 1 1/2 cups of the sugar, salt, 1 teaspoon of the cinnamon, and the shortening, baking powder, and eggs until blended. Add the milk and blend until smooth. The batter will be thick. Spread into the prepared pan.

Arrange the apple slices in and on top of the cake, covering the top and overlapping the slices as necessary. Combine the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar and 2 tablespoons of cinnamon and sprinkle the mixture over the apples. Arrange the slices of butter on top, placing the slices about 2 inches apart.

Bake for 30 minutes on the bottom rack, then on the top rack for another 10 to 15 minutes. Slice and serve warm with additional butter on top, if

desired.

My grandpa used to make this cake for his family on Christmas morning for breakfast. When he passed away, it became my mother's pleasure to do this for her family. My mom has moved away and now it will become my pleasure to do this for my family, a long-standing tradition I will be pleased to pass on some day. It is a heavy batter but the richest-tasting cake. The anticipation from our family is great, and I hope it will become a great family tradition for others also. —WJ

Jeanne Sternenberg
Canyon, Texas

Mimi's

Peach Beehives

with Glaze

Makes 4 servings

5 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons milk
2 cups confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
4 peaches
1 egg
1 (9-inch) refrigerated, prepared pie crust
Pinch of ground cinnamon
1/2 cup granulated sugar

Preheat the oven to 400°F. In a medium bowl, cream the butter until it is pale. Add 2 tablespoons of milk and blend well. Add the confectioners' sugar and vanilla and blend until smooth. Set the glaze aside, keeping it at room temperature.

Wash and dry the peaches. Do not peel. In a small bowl, whisk together the egg and the remaining 1/4 cup of milk. Roll out the pie crust and cut it into 1/4-inch strips. Dip a strip into the egg wash and wrap horizontally around a peach. Repeat until the peach is covered completely with dough and place in a baking dish. Repeat for all the peaches.

In a small bowl, combine the cinnamon and sugar and sprinkle over the peaches. Bake for 35 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown. Place on a serving plate and top with 1 to 2 tablespoons of the glaze. Serve warm.

This will look like a beehive! This can also be served with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Very attractive, easy, and delicious! This has become my family's favorite get-together dessert! —JS



Anna Wozniak
Montreal, Canada

Szarlotka

{Polish Apple Pie}

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cake

Dough

3 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup butter or margarine
2 eggs
2 tablespoons sour cream
1/4 cup sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
Pinch of salt

Filling

4 1/2 pounds baking apples (8 to 9 medium apples)
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
4–5 tablespoons sugar
1/4 cup raisins
2 tablespoons dried bread crumbs

To prepare the dough, place the flour, butter, eggs, sour cream, sugar, baking powder, vanilla, and salt in a medium bowl and beat until the dough just comes together, or place in the work bowl of a food processor and process just until the dough forms a ball. Do not overbeat. Divide the dough in half, shaping each piece into a flattened disk. Wrap each disk in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Roll out the dough into two rectangles and use one to line a 9 by 13-inch pan. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the crust is golden.

To make the filling, peel, core, and grate the apples. Drain the excess juice. In a medium bowl, mix together the grated apples, cinnamon, sugar, and raisins.

Lower the oven to 325°F. Spread the bread crumbs on top of the baked crust. Spoon the apple filling over the crumbs and then place the second piece of dough on top. Bake for 50 minutes, or until baked through.

This is a traditional and very popular cake on every Polish family table. —AW



Rebecca Clark
Hammond, Louisiana

Mamaw Burchfield's Sweet Potato Pie

Makes two 9-inch pies

2 pounds large sweet potatoes, peeled (3 to 4 sweet potatoes)

1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened

2 cups sugar

4 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 (12-ounce) can evaporated milk

1 (15-ounce) package refrigerated, unbaked double pie crusts

Place the sweet potatoes in a large saucepan and add enough water to cover them. Bring to a boil. Boil for about 30 minutes, or until easily pierced by a fork. Drain the potatoes and allow to cool slightly.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine the sweet potatoes and butter. Beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Stir in the sugar until combined and then mix in the eggs one at a time. Add the vanilla, salt, and evaporated milk and blend well.

Line two 9-inch pie pans with pie crust. Pour the mixture into the pie crusts, dividing it equally between the two pans. Set the filled pie pans on a cookie sheet and place in the oven. Bake for 70 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Let cool completely on a wire rack. Slice and serve.

This is a recipe for my mamaw's sweet potato pie. I've never seen a recipe like this one. All others have spices and her recipe tastes like a sweet potato. She was a wonderful baker and she always remembered what was your favorite, and at Christmas her buffet would be groaning with everyone's favorite. Her great-grandson loves this pie. The first time he tried it he was two years old—she had turned her back for a second and he took a butter knife and cut a square piece right out of the middle of the pie. She never forgot and she would make this pie filling and freeze containers of it so her baby could have it. —RC

Claire Nelson
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dried Fruit Cobbler with Lemon-Cornmeal Dumplings

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Makes 6 servings

Fruit filling

- 1 pound assorted dried fruit, chopped coarsely
- 4 cups cranberry juice cocktail
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch

Dumplings

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Lemon glaze

- 1 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

Vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

To make the filling, in a large saucepan, combine the dried fruit, 3 1/2 cups of the cranberry juice cocktail, and the sugar. Stir well. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes.

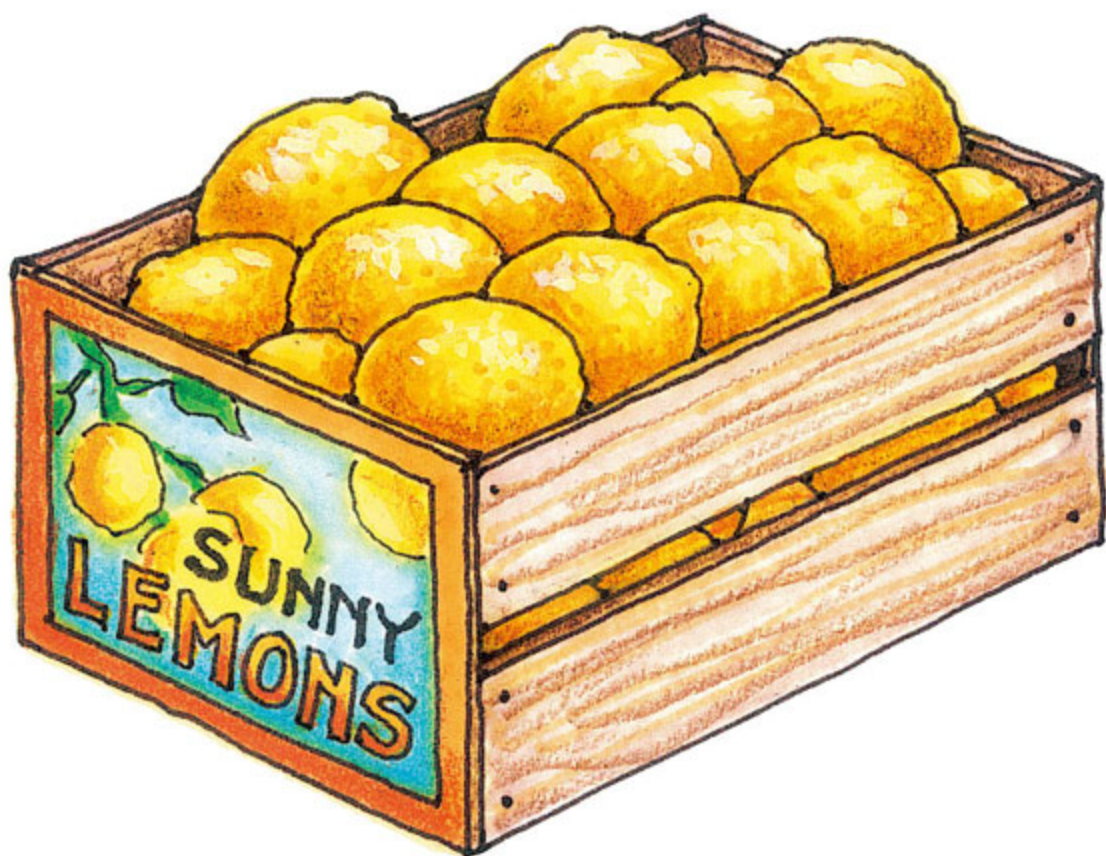
Mix the remaining 1/2 cup of cranberry juice cocktail with the cornstarch in a small bowl. Add to the fruit. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; remove from the heat.

To make the dumplings, mix together the cornmeal, flour, 1/2 cup of sugar, baking powder, and cinnamon in a medium bowl. Blend well. In another bowl, mix together the milk, butter, lemon zest, egg, and vanilla. Stir the milk mixture into the dry ingredients, until just mixed.

Pour the fruit mixture into the prepared baking dish. Then spoon the dumpling mixture on top of the fruit filling. Bake for 20 minutes.

Make the lemon glaze while the dish is baking. In a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, lemon juice, and vanilla and blend well. Spoon the glaze over the cooked dish. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, if desired.

This is an old family recipe that has been handed down. I have changed a couple of ingredients to make it healthier and easier to prepare. My family loves the fresh taste and I always take it to family outings. I like to use an assortment of dried fruit but you can change the fruit to suit your taste. We love it! —CN



Ann Schultz
Springfield, Missouri

German Chocolate **Brownie Bars**

Makes 35 bars

1 (18.25-ounce) German chocolate cake mix
5 eggs
1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1 (16-ounce) box confectioners' sugar
2 ounces white chocolate, grated

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray.

In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, three of the eggs, and the butter. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and set aside.

In a medium bowl, beat together the vanilla, the two remaining eggs, and the cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Pour the mixture on top of the batter in the pan. Bake for 30 minutes, or until set. Remove from the oven, and while still warm, sprinkle the top with the grated white chocolate. Let cool and cut into bars to serve.

Sandi Andersen
Henderson, Minnesota

Grandma Goldie's Rhubarb Cobbler

Makes one 9 by 13-inch cobbler

4 cups cut-up rhubarb
2 cups sugar
1 cup plus 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
1 egg, beaten

Vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. In a medium bowl, mix together the rhubarb, 1 cup of the sugar, and 3 tablespoons of the flour. Spread the mixture into the prepared baking dish.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the remaining 1 cup of flour, 1 cup of sugar, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Add the butter and mix. Add the egg. Mix together until crumbly and then sprinkle on top of the rhubarb mixture.

Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the crust is golden. Let cool for 5 minutes and serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, if desired.



This simple-to-make cobbler is a favorite because it came from my grandma Goldie. This crunchy cobbler was so good with ice cream!

The recipe is given for a rhubarb cobbler although cherries, blueberries, peaches, and apples all work well with this cobbler crust. I think it must be the egg that makes this crust so crunchy.

It is always a hit at picnics and I never come home with any leftovers! —SA

Sue Leicht
Schaumburg, Illinois

Erik's Cherry Bars

Makes about 35 bars

1 cup butter or margarine, softened
1 cup sugar
2 egg yolks
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 (12-ounce) can cherry filling
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting
1 ounce (1 square) chocolate-almond bark

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugar together. Add the egg yolks one at a time to the butter mixture and beat. Add the flour and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Set 1/2 cup of the dough aside. Press the remaining dough onto the bottom of an ungreased 9 by 13-inch baking pan.

Spread the cherry filling on top of the dough. Drop small pieces of the reserved dough over the cherry filling. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until lightly browned. Let cool and then dust with the confectioners' sugar.

Melt the chocolate-almond bark in a microwave oven or the top of a double boiler over simmering water. Drizzle the melted chocolate over the baked dessert. Cut into bars and serve.

My nephews and nieces love these cookies. I have a signature red container that when they see it they know I made Erik's Cherry

Bars. They are named after Erik because he eats the most. When I bring them to family gatherings, they're sneaking cookies so by the time it's time for dessert half the cookies are gone and they say, "Aunt Sue only brought half a recipe," which always brings a lot of giggles. —SL

Kathleen Rushin
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

Blueberry Buckle

Makes one 9-inch cake

Cake

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup shortening
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
3/4 cup milk
2 cups (1 pint) blueberries

Streusel topping

1/2 cup sugar
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened

Whipped cream, for serving (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Spray a 9-inch springform pan with nonstick cooking spray.

To make the cake, in a medium mixing bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, and salt. In a large mixing bowl, cream the shortening and sugar for 3 minutes, or until fluffy. Add the egg and beat. Add the flour mixture in three parts, alternating with the milk. Next, fold the blueberries into the batter. Pour the batter into the prepared pan. (The batter will be thick.)

To make the streusel topping, combine the dry ingredients in a small bowl. Add the butter and mix with a fork. The topping will be crumbly. Sprinkle it evenly over the batter.

Bake for 45 to 55 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool completely, then transfer from the pan to a serving plate. Slice and serve with a dollop of whipped cream, if desired.

“What is a buckle?” you might ask. A buckle is an old-fashioned, single-layer cake with a streusel-type topping. The batter is quite dense. As the cake bakes, the batter sinks to the bottom of the pan, which makes the streusel buckle on top. Enjoy!
—XR

Sally Landy
Saint Louis, Missouri

Sally's Lemon Squares

Makes 35 squares

Crust

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 cup butter or margarine, softened

Filling

4 eggs, beaten slightly
2 cups sugar
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

Glaze

1 cup confectioners' sugar
2–3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 9 by 13-inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

To make the crust, combine the flour, confectioners' sugar, and butter in a large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer until blended. Press the mixture evenly into the bottom of the prepared pan. Bake for 20 minutes, or until light golden brown.

Make the filling while the crust is baking. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, sugar, flour, and baking powder. Blend well and then stir in the lemon juice. Pour the mixture over the warm crust. Return to the oven for another 25 to 30 minutes, or until the top is light golden brown. Let cool completely.

Make the glaze while the squares are cooling. In a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar and lemon juice and blend until smooth. Spread over the cooled squares.

Whenever I bring these lemon squares to a party, and people begin to eat one, they soon tell everyone in the room they must try one. Next, I am asked for the recipe and told they are the absolute best lemon squares they have ever had. —SL

Ann Schultz
Springfield, Missouri

Elegant Chocolate Soufflé

Makes 2 servings

1 tablespoon butter or margarine
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 cup milk
1 (1-ounce) square semisweet baking chocolate
2 tablespoons water
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs
Confectioners' sugar, for sprinkling
Whipped cream, for garnish

Place the baking rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the oven to 325°F. Spray the bottom and sides of two 12-ounce soufflé dishes with nonstick cooking spray and then sprinkle them with granulated sugar.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, whisk together the butter, flour, and milk. Cook, stirring constantly, until thickened to a puddinglike consistency. Remove from the heat.

In a small microwavable bowl, combine the chocolate, water, and sugar. Microwave on high (100 percent) power for 45 seconds and then stir until melted and smooth. Whisk the chocolate mixture into the pudding mixture and add the vanilla.

Separate the eggs and place the egg whites into a medium mixing bowl. Add a small amount of the chocolate mixture to the egg yolks to temper the eggs. Add the tempered egg yolks to the soufflé batter and blend well.

Beat the egg whites at high speed for 2 to 3 minutes, or until stiff peaks form. Gently fold the egg whites into the soufflé batter. Divide the mixture evenly between the two prepared dishes.

Place the dishes in a 9 by 13-inch baking pan and pour just enough warm water around the dishes in the pan to cover the bottom of the soufflé dishes. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the chocolate is set. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar and top with whipped cream. Serve warm.

Kathy Walden
East Falmouth, Massachusetts

J & J

Banana Muffin Bars

Makes 16 bars

1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 cup wheat germ
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 tablespoons butter or margarine, softened
2 tablespoons peanut butter
1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 egg
1 banana, mashed
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. In a medium bowl, combine the whole wheat flour, flour, wheat germ, and baking powder.

In a large bowl, cream together the butter, peanut butter, applesauce, sugar, brown sugar, and vanilla. Add the egg and blend well. Add the mashed banana. Add the dry ingredients and blend well. Fold in the chocolate chips.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool for 5 minutes and cut into bars to serve.

My daughter Terri and sons Jack and James like to help bake and I am always trying to find ways to add healthier things and take out some fat and sugar. One neighbor and friend told us her son wouldn't eat the bars because he doesn't like bananas. But he really likes them and has them whenever we do. My hope is that we will become more aware of what we are eating, and how to make healthier choices. —KW

Mary Engelbreit
Saint Louis, Missouri

Mary & Mamie's Christmas Pecans

Makes about 2 cups pecans

1 egg white
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2–2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 cups pecan halves
1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted

Preheat the oven to 325°F. In a small bowl, beat the egg white until stiff. In a medium bowl, mix the sugar, salt, and cinnamon.

Add the pecans to the egg white and stir. When completely covered in egg white, drop the pecans into the sugar mixture and stir. Pour the melted butter into a 10 by 15-inch jelly-roll pan and swirl to cover the pan evenly. Place the coated pecans in the jelly-roll pan. Bake for 10 minutes, stir, and then bake for an additional 10 minutes. Allow to cool completely.

My mom was part of a girls' dinner and drinks club called simply Club and they would exchange recipes. This recipe was a favorite of mine and is still part of many family gatherings. —ME

Metric Conversions & Equivalents

Approximate Metric Equivalents

Volume

1/4 teaspoon = 1 milliliter
1/2 teaspoon = 2.5 milliliters
3/4 teaspoon = 4 milliliters
1 teaspoon = 5 milliliters
1 1/4 teaspoons = 6 milliliters
1 1/2 teaspoons = 7.5 milliliters
1 3/4 teaspoons = 8.5 milliliters
2 teaspoons = 10 milliliters
1 tablespoon (1/2 fluid ounce) = 15 milliliters
2 tablespoons (1 fluid ounce) = 30 milliliters
1/4 cup = 60 milliliters
1/3 cup = 80 milliliters
1/2 cup (4 fluid ounces) = 120 milliliters
2/3 cup = 160 milliliters
3/4 cup = 180 milliliters
1 cup (8 fluid ounces) = 240 milliliters
1 1/4 cups = 300 milliliters
1 1/2 cups (12 fluid ounces) = 360 milliliters
1 2/3 cups = 400 milliliters
2 cups (1 pint) = 460 milliliters
3 cups = 700 milliliters
4 cups (1 quart) = 0.95 liter
1 quart plus 1/4 cup = 1 liter
4 quarts (1 gallon) = 3.8 liters

Weight

1/4 ounce = 7 grams
1/2 ounce = 14 grams
3/4 ounce = 21 grams
1 ounce = 28 grams
1 1/4 ounces = 35 grams

1 1/2 ounces = 42.5 grams
1 2/3 ounces = 45 grams
2 ounces = 57 grams
3 ounces = 85 grams
4 ounces (1/4 pound) = 113 grams
5 ounces = 142 grams
6 ounces = 170 grams
7 ounces = 198 grams
8 ounces (1/2 pound) = 227 grams
16 ounces (1 pound) = 454 grams
35.25 ounces (2.2 pounds) = 1 kilogram

Length

1/8 inch = 3 millimeters
1/4 inch = 6 millimeters
1/2 inch = 1.25 centimeters
1 inch = 2.5 centimeters
2 inches = 5 centimeters
2 1/2 inches = 6 centimeters
4 inches = 10 centimeters
5 inches = 13 centimeters
6 inches = 15.25 centimeters
12 inches (1 foot) = 30 centimeters

Metric Conversion Formulas

To Convert

Ounces to grams
Pounds to kilograms
Teaspoons to milliliters
Tablespoons to milliliters
Fluid ounces to milliliters
Cups to milliliters
Cups to liters
Pints to liters
Quarts to liters
Gallons to liters
Inches to centimeters

Multiply

Ounces by 28.35
Pounds by 0.454
Teaspoons by 4.93
Tablespoons by 14.79
Fluid ounces by 29.57
Cups by 236.59
Cups by 0.236
Pints by 0.473
Quarts by 0.946
Gallons by 3.785
Inches by 2.54



Oven Temperatures

To convert Fahrenheit to Celsius, subtract 32 from Fahrenheit, multiply the result by 5, then divide by 9.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Fahrenheit</u>	<u>Celsius</u>	<u>British Gas Mark</u>
Very cool	200°	95°	0
Very cool	225°	110°	1/4
Very cool	250°	120°	1/2
Cool	275°	135°	1
Cool	300°	150°	2
Warm	325°	165°	3
Moderate	350°	175°	4
Moderately hot	375°	190°	5
Fairly hot	400°	200°	6
Hot	425°	220°	7
Very hot	450°	230°	8
Very hot	475°	245°	9

Common Ingredients and Their Approximate Equivalents

1 cup uncooked rice = 225 grams

1 cup all-purpose flour = 140 grams

1 stick butter (4 ounces • 1/2 cup • 8 tablespoons) = 110 grams

1 cup butter (8 ounces • 2 sticks • 16 tablespoons) = 220 grams

1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed = 225 grams

1 cup granulated sugar = 200 grams

Information compiled from a variety of sources, including *Recipes into Type* by Joan Whitman and Dolores Simon (Newton, MA: Biscuit Books, 2000); *The New Food Lover's Companion* by Sharon Tyler

Herbst (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, 1995); and *Rosemary Brown's Big Kitchen Instruction Book* (Kansas City, MO: Andrews McMeel, 1998).

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Mary Engelbreit's Fan Fare Cookbook: 120 Family Favorite Recipes

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